
Drug Trafficking, the Venezuelan Government, and the US. Mr. Rubio's Lies

By: Francisco Delgado Rodríguez

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The media firepower of the US government is beyond question, especially in this era of what someone called post-truth, which, in plain language, means that any truth itself is gradually becoming more and more irrelevant.

Well, Mr. Rubio appears to be leading one of the most strident anti-truth operations these days, with the involvement of the Attorney General's Office and the imperial naval and air forces.

The victim of this outrage is the noble Venezuelan people, assured by the State Department that they have a government led by the head of a drug-trafficking conglomerate known as the Cartel of the Suns, reason enough to threaten President Maduro with kidnapping and invasion.

Therefore, it's useful to put this harrowing narrative into perspective, which emulates Mario Puzo's most emblematic work in fiction, with the difference that the well-known writer recreated real-life situations in the United States.

The legend of the Cartel of the Suns dates back long before Mr. Rubio headed the US Foreign Ministry. The term was used in the 1990s, before Chávez became president; its name comes from the sun insignia worn on the epaulettes of Venezuelan military personnel to distinguish their respective ranks.

In those pre-Chavez years, when Maduro was a simple and harassed union leader and truck driver, reports surfaced about links between Venezuelan military personnel and drug trafficking, which was rife in neighboring Colombia.

Subsequently, other rumors emerged about possible sporadic and occasional relationships between drug traffickers and low-ranking Venezuelan officials deployed in border areas with Colombia, then governed by Uribe, who is now under house arrest and whom Mr. Rubio calls an exemplary Colombian.

Despite the above, the existence of an organized structure, or anything similar, or anything worthy of the label of a

cartel could never be proven; in the Venezuelan case, it's pure conjecture conveniently piled up by the enemies of the Bolivarian Revolution.

And in this anti-Maduro crusade, Mr. Rubio, seeking the greatest possible credibility based on past episodes, adds that the Venezuelan military's high command, avowedly Chavista, is narco, and there's nothing further to discuss, ignoring the fact that Chavista military doctrine is a declared enemy of drug trafficking.

In short, Maduro cannot be the head of a cartel fabricated for political purposes, and there isn't even evidence or a photo of him lost in a corner with a drug trafficker, like Uribe or his disciple Iván Duque do.

The UNODC (UN entity) report

Mr. Rubio doesn't usually get along very well with the UN; his criminal support for the genocide in Gaza, declared as such by the top leaders of this international entity, is proof of this.

This case in particular, the UNODC's World Drug Report 2025 highlights that Venezuela has been a "territory free of illicit crops for at least 15 years," "not a relevant player in global cocaine trafficking," and "does not appear as a key country on international cocaine trafficking routes." It concludes by recognizing "the anti-drug efforts of the National Anti-Drug Superintendency and the Venezuelan military and police forces in eradicating crops and combating transnational criminal networks."

Some rationality remains in the world, much to the chagrin of Mr. Rubio and the screenwriters of this film. Except for the US government, and recently Ecuador, which is said to be deeply entangled in these affairs, the rest of the world doesn't recognize the existence of the so-called epaulette cartel; not even the European Union seems to have bought into this story, despite its bad rapport with the Bolivarian government.

Mr. Rubio's Country and Drug Trafficking

Without official figures, for some convoluted reason, serious estimates show that the drug business moves some \$500 billion annually internationally, of which 60%, some \$300 billion, is generated in the US alone.

This colossal volume, of course, requires entities to manage it, to handle distribution, territorial control, money laundering, and management of related businesses.

In short, there are, yes or no, American cartels, which apparently aren't of major concern to Mr. Rubio, who has the mess right under his nose, but he is dealing with a supposedly fantasy cartel, which, according to this legend, is located about 2,000 km from South Florida.

Regarding the existence of American cartels, anyone who wants to learn more runs into a first problem: the lack of acceptance of that term in the official narrative of this country, despite leaked documents from Congress and the ineffable DEA describing them as such.

However, the presence of well-organized structures, which are described as "local gangs," is documented, manipulating information about their true scale. Mention is made of the Latin Kings, MS-13, Bloods, Crips, and biker groups such as the Hells Angels, as well as traditional mafias such as the Gambino and Genovese families. It's even likely that these names are just the tip of the iceberg.

These networks use relatively sophisticated methods for managing monetary trafficking, such as cryptocurrencies and underground financial systems, although large banking corporations, such as HSBC, Wachovia, and Citigroup, as well as Deutsche Bank and JPMorgan Chase, among others, have been implicated from time to time.

Speaking of suns and epaulettes, the involvement of the US armed forces deserves a separate chapter. From the existence of evidence of US military involvement in certain episodes—for example, the most notorious one involving the special forces stationed at Fort Bragg, nicknamed the Fort Bragg Cartel—to the Iran-Contra scandal, to the legacy of the occupation of Afghanistan, the "largest narco-state in the world" during that period.

At the same time, and without leaving the country, scandals involving corrupt police forces are frequent, and the DEA is even being called the main cartel due to the "curious" way in which they carry out operations, which rather contribute to the robustness of opioid trafficking in the country, and because this institution would simply disappear

if such businesses did not prosper.

Drug trafficking and its cousin, arms trafficking, are a true tragedy, turning the American dream into a nightmare, leaving a trail of alienation and death. In 2023 alone, it affected 61.8 million people, with 114,000 deaths due to the use of fentanyl, cocaine, and methamphetamine, especially.

But Mr. Rubio is busy and wants to entertain others with the infamous Venezuelan cartel, leaving the emphasis on his own "local gangs" for a better time.

As a sort of culmination of this grim theatrical production, Mr. Rubio has dangerously involved the naval and air forces, some 4,000 troops, threatening the entire Caribbean region in a gesture of pure bellicose arrogance, deployed to pursue a phantom or nonexistent cartel.

Now it's time for the widest possible dissemination of this latest lie from Mr. Rubio, with its bellicose overtones, and demands from all corners of Our America that he withdraw his ships and planes from the Caribbean. Tolerating these blackmails against Venezuela paves the way for the empire to do the same to others.

Recall the unanimously approved, binding declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace at the CELAC Summit held in Havana on January 28, 2014: "We reject any form of direct or indirect intervention in the internal affairs of States, as well as the use or threat of force, economic blockades, unilateral coercive sanctions, and any other means intended to force sovereign decisions."

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff
