

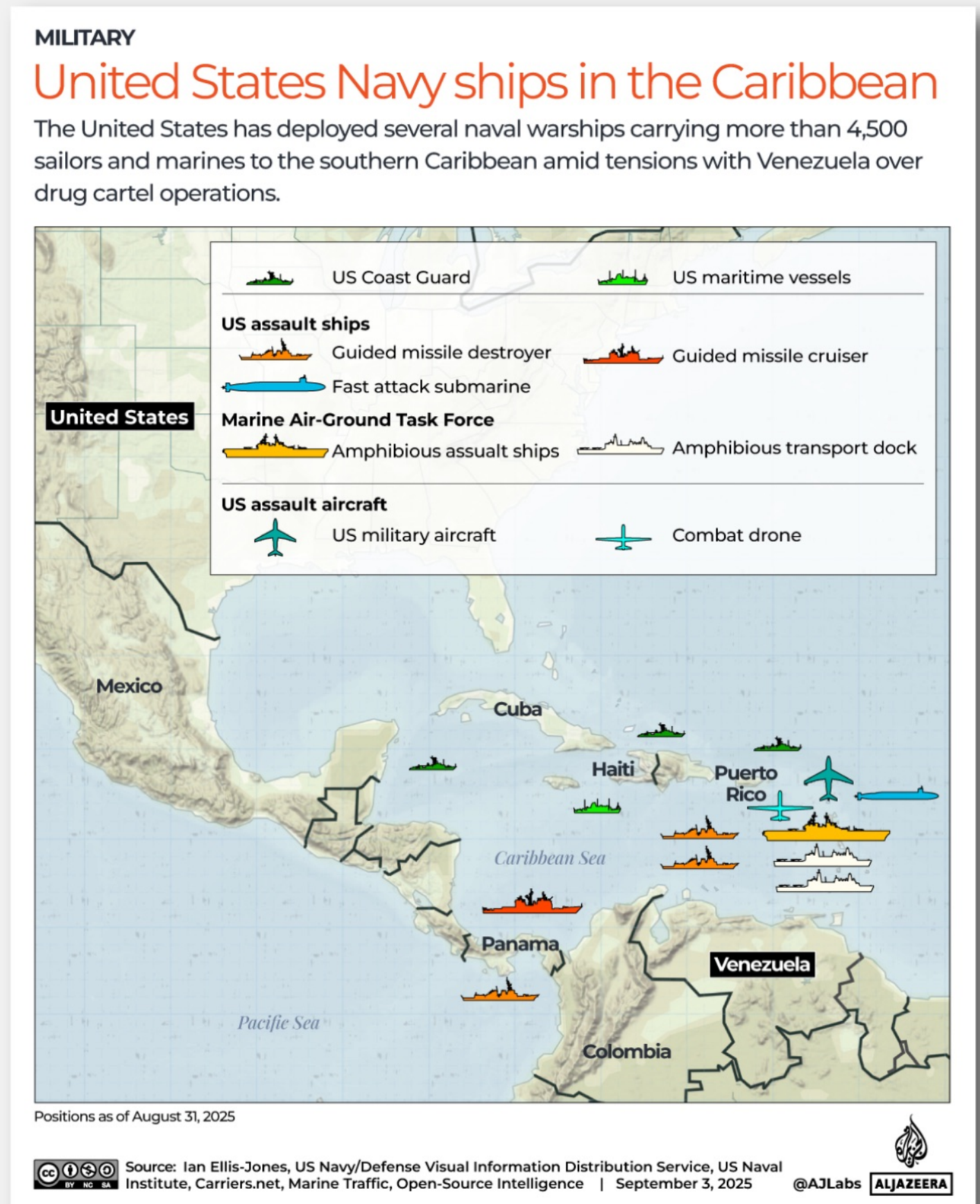


CLIMATE VANGUARD

Hands off Venezuela

Since mid-August, the US has been rapidly expanding its military presence in the southern Caribbean Sea near Venezuela's territorial waters.

This includes the deployment of over 4,000 troops, seven navy warships, and a nuclear-powered submarine.



The Trump administration has justified these moves as part of an “anti-cartel mission” to combat “narcoterrorists” accused of “sending drugs to the US.”

But the numbers don't add up. Little more than 10% of lethal drugs entering the US travel across the Caribbean Sea. The vast majority go along the Pacific Coast, originating from the Andes, Central America, and Mexico. This suggests there are other motives for the military encirclement of Venezuela →

PRESS RELEASES

Treasury Sanctions Venezuelan Cartel Headed by Maduro

July 25, 2025

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned the **Cartel de los Soles** (a.k.a. Cartel of the Suns) as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. Cartel de los Soles is a Venezuela-based criminal group headed by Nicolas Maduro Moros and other high-ranking Venezuelan individuals in the Maduro regime that provides material support to foreign terrorist organizations threatening the peace and security of the United States, namely Tren de Aragua and the Sinaloa Cartel.

Convenient But **False** Tales

After Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez died in 2013, several exiled journalists claimed that high-ranking officials belonged to the so-called "Cártel de Los Soles," allegedly coordinating drug-trafficking operations. Soon after, the journalists admitted that much of their reporting was fabricated and that the Cártel de Los Soles did not actually exist as an organised group.

But this admission didn't stop the US from formally accusing Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro of leading the cartel and offering a \$15 million reward for his arrest on charges of "narco-terrorism" and drug trafficking.

The Current Escalation

On the very first day of Trump's second presidency, he issued an executive order to designate drug cartels as terrorist organisations, declaring "an all-out war on the dealers, smugglers, traffickers, and cartels."

Three months later, the US increased its reward for the arrest of Maduro to \$50 million, once again citing his leadership of a non-existent cartel.



 **REWARD**
INCREASE OF

\$50,000,000

FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST OF
LEADER OF THE SPECIALLY DESIGNATED GLOBAL TERRORIST
CARTEL DE LOS SINOS



Nicolás Maduro

FOR NARCO-TERRORISM CONSPIRACY,
CONSPIRACY, CONSPIRACY TO USE AND
DESTRUCTIVE DEVICES IN FURTHERANCE OF

 SEND TIPS TO
CartelSoleTips@dea.dhs.gov
ALL IDENTITIES ARE KEPT
CONFIDENTIAL

STATE.GOV

WARD
UP TO



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**ST AND/OR CONVICTION OF THE
ATED GLOBAL TERRORIST
SOLES**



ro Moros

**Y, COCAINE IMPORTATION
O CARRY MACHINE GUNS AND
RANCE OF A DRUG CRIME**

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gov (e-mail)

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In July, Trump secretly ordered the military to launch operations against drug cartels. In recent weeks, this has escalated to **US drone strikes on speedboats off the Venezuelan coast**, destroying the boats and killing those on board. While the Trump administration publicly celebrated the deaths of the alleged “terrorists” on board, who they claimed were transporting drugs, Venezuela insisted those aboard were fishers.

Many have condemned the attacks as violating the Declaration of Human Rights, including Colombian president Gustavo Petro, who exclaimed **that aggression against “an unarmed and unarmored boat with a missile is murder.”**



Drug War Imperialism

These moves are nothing new. Since the 1970s, the so-called “war on drugs” has been at the centre of US imperialist expansion in Latin America.

For example, in **Panama**, the US used drug-trafficking charges to oust Manuel Noriega in 1989, replacing him with a government aligned with its interests. In **Colombia**, it backed the state against leftist guerrillas under the guise of a counter-narcotics programme. And in **Mexico**, they assisted the military in weakening drug traffickers who were obstructing US business operations.



Why Venezuela?

In 1999, Hugo Chávez was elected president of Venezuela, kickstarting a process of socialist construction known as the Bolivarian Revolution. This process has attempted to use Venezuela's natural wealth, including the largest known oil reserves in the world, to lift people out of poverty and build their protagonism.

Unsurprisingly, Venezuela's pursuit of sovereign development and popular democracy is viewed as a threat by the US, which seeks to maintain imperial dominance over the Western hemisphere.

FINANCE & TAX

Trump sanctions Venezuelan oil in latest move against Maduro



The US has deployed a range of tactics to derail the Bolivarian Revolution, including a vicious sanctions regime, which caused 40,000 excess deaths in Venezuela between 2017 and 2018, and consistent meddling in Venezuelan elections.

Military action against “narco-terrorism” is the latest tactical escalation. It attempts to provide ideological cover for the US’ desperate attempts to overthrow Maduro and gain access to Venezuelan oil. Trump has admitted as much himself, allegedly saying in 2017:

“That’s the country we should be going to war with. They have all that oil and they’re right on our back door.”

Together, the US' actions against Venezuela exemplify hyper-imperialism, the current stage of imperialism marked by the US' increasing reliance on militarism and hybrid warfare to maintain its dominance in an emerging multipolar world.

We must resolutely defend the sovereignty of the Venezuelan people and denounce US imperialism wherever it rears its head.