

Trump Considers Military Action Against Latin American Drug Cartels

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WASHINGTON, D.C. President Donald Trump is reportedly preparing to use the U.S. military to target drug cartels operating in Latin America, according to U.S. media reports released Friday. This move follows Washington's earlier designation of several narcotics trafficking organizations as foreign terrorist groups.

The New York Times reported that Trump has instructed the Pentagon to develop plans for military operations against drug cartels classified as terrorist organizations. The Wall Street Journal added that the administration is considering deploying special forces and providing intelligence support, with coordination expected alongside international partners.

White House spokesperson Anna Kelly declined to confirm specific plans but emphasized that protecting the homeland remains Trump's "top priority." She cited the president's decision to designate several cartels and gangs as foreign terrorist organizations as a "bold step" toward that goal.

In February, the U.S. government formally designated Venezuela's Tren de Aragua, Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel, and six other Latin American drug trafficking groups as terrorist organizations. More recently, the Cartel of the Suns, another Venezuelan gang, was added to the list. The United States alleges that the cartel has smuggled hundreds of tons of narcotics into the country over the past two decades and accuses Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro of leading the group, a claim Maduro's government has dismissed as a "ridiculous smokescreen."

On his first day back in office, January 20, Trump signed an executive order establishing a process for designating such organizations, describing them as a "national-security threat beyond that posed by traditional organized crime."

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, in an interview with EWTN on Thursday, highlighted that these designations enable the U.S. government to leverage various agencies, including intelligence services and the Department of Defense, to confront the groups. "We have to start treating them as armed terrorist organizations, not simply drug-dealing organizations," Rubio said, framing the issue as a national security concern rather than solely a law enforcement matter.

Trump has previously vowed to "wage war" on Mexican drug cartels, accusing them of involvement in violent crimes, including rape and murder.

In response to reports of potential U.S. military intervention, Mexico's capital mayor, Claudia Sheinbaum, strongly rejected any possibility of an invasion. "There will be no invasion. That is ruled out," she said Friday. Sheinbaum emphasized ongoing cooperation between the two countries in combating drug trafficking but insisted Mexico would not allow foreign troops on its soil.

Sheinbaum has gained recognition for her diplomatic efforts in easing tensions with the Trump administration, often described in the media as the “Trump whisperer.” Her approach has included measures aimed at reducing drug smuggling and migration across the U.S.-Mexico border, which Trump has cited as major issues.

The U.S. embassy in Mexico released a joint statement on Friday, affirming that both countries are committed to using “every tool at our disposal to protect our peoples” from drug trafficking groups.