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RUBIO: This Is Our Hemisphere – and President Trump Will Not Allow Our Security to be Threatened

The White House

January 4, 2026

This morning, Secretary of State Marco Rubio joined multiple news programs to discuss the Trump Administration’s decisive operation that successfully apprehended indicted

narcoterrorist and illegitimate former Venezuelan dictator Nicolás Maduro. Secretary Rubio underscored President Donald J. Trump’s ironclad commitment to preventing the Western Hemisphere from becoming a safe haven for drug traffickers, Iranian proxies, or hostile regimes that endanger our national security — declaring the days of weakness are over and the U.S. will deploy every tool to eradicate these threats from our backyard.

- “There’s not a war. We are at war against drug trafficking organizations — not a war against Venezuela.” ([Watch](#))
- “We don’t have U.S. forces on the ground in Venezuela. They were on the ground for about two hours when they went to capture Maduro... What the President is saying is very simple — and that is as President of the United States, he is not going to go around telling people what he’s not going to do.” ([Watch](#))
- “This is the Western Hemisphere. This is where we live — and we’re not going to allow the Western Hemisphere to be a base of operation for adversaries, competitors, and rivals of the United States.” ([Watch](#))
- “The first steps are securing what’s in the national interest of the United States and also beneficial to the people of Venezuela, and those are the things that we’re focused on right now. No more drug trafficking. No more Iran, Hezbollah presence there. No more using the oil industry to enrich all our adversaries around the world.” ([Watch](#))
- “This was not an action that required congressional approval. In fact, it couldn’t require congressional approval because this was not an invasion. This is not an extended military operation... We will seek congressional approval for actions that require congressional approval. Otherwise, they’ll get congressional notification.” ([Watch](#))

- “The whole foreign policy apparatus thinks everything is Libya, everything is Iraq, everything is Afghanistan. This is not the Middle East, and our mission here is very different. This is the Western Hemisphere.” ([Watch](#))
- “The most immediate changes are the ones that are in the national interests of the United States. That’s why we’re involved here — because of how it applies and has a direct impact on the United States.” ([Watch](#))
- “We’ve seen how our adversaries all over the world are exploiting and extracting resources from Africa, from every other country. They’re not going to do it in the Western Hemisphere. That is not going to happen under President Trump. Read our national security strategy. He is serious about it.” ([Watch](#))
- “What we are going to react to is very simple: what do you do? Not what you’re saying publicly, what happens... Do the drugs stop coming? Are the changes made? Is Iran expelled? Is Hezbollah and Iran no longer able to operate against our interests from Venezuela?” ([Watch](#))
- “It’s running policy — the policy with regards to this. We want Venezuela to move in a certain direction because not only do we think it’s good for the people of Venezuela, it’s in our national interest.” ([Watch](#))
- “We retain all the options we had before this raid and this capture and this arrest... until such time as changes are made.” ([Watch](#))
- “In the Biden Administration, they had a \$25 million reward for [Maduro’s] capture — so we have a reward for his capture but we’re not going to enforce it? That’s the difference between President Trump and everybody else... President Trump did something about it.” ([Watch](#))
- “Until they address [the problems], they will continue to face this oil quarantine. They will continue to face pressure from the United States. We will continue to target drug boats if they try to run towards the United States. We will continue to seize the boats that are sanctioned with court orders. We will continue to do that and potentially other things until the things we need to see addressed are addressed... The number one thing we care about is the safety, security, wellbeing, and prosperity of the United States.” ([Watch](#))
- “Maduro is not just an indicted drug trafficker; he was an illegitimate president. He was not the head of state. I continue to see these media reports referring to him as ‘President Maduro’ and the ‘head of state.’ He was not the head of state.” ([Watch](#))

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