



Maduro's Venezuela Continues Its Campaign of Regional Destabilization

OE Watch Commentary: President Nicolás Maduro engages in frequent provocations with Venezuela's neighbors. In an effort to rattle Guyana, the Venezuelan Air Force recently flew sorties over a disputed border region shared by the two countries, notes *Infobae*, an Argentine outlet that leans slightly left with excellent reporting from around the Americas. These flights come on the heels of an earlier incident in which the Venezuelan Navy detained two Guyanese ships and spuriously accused them of fishing in Venezuela's Exclusive Economic Zone, as reported by *France 24*, the state-owned media company based in Paris with solid presence throughout Latin America. Both incidents received a strong rebuke from Guyana's president and regional organizations, such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization for American States (OAS). Maduro's aggressive actions continue to sabotage both the region's economic development and the rule of law, including by stymieing Guyana's attempt to profit from recent offshore oil discoveries to transform the nation's economy and undermining efforts by the International Court of Justice to arbitrate the border dispute. **End OE Watch Commentary (Berg)**



The Venezuelan Air Force has been used in the country's escalating campaign for the disputed Essequibo region, on the border between Venezuela and Guyana.
Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mirage_50DV_Venezuela_\(16126726323\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mirage_50DV_Venezuela_(16126726323).jpg), Attribution: Wikimedia Commons

“The overflight occurred after the Lady Nayera and Sea Wolf vessels returned to port together with the 12 Guyanese fishermen arrested on January 21 by Venezuela, accused by the government of that country of allegedly fishing in its jurisdictional waters.”

Source: “Guyana denunció el sobrevuelo de aviones militares de Venezuela sobre la zona en disputa entre ambos países (Guyana denounced the overflight of Venezuelan military aircraft over the area in dispute between the two countries),” *Infobae* (an Argentine outlet that leans slightly left with excellent reporting from around the Americas), 3 March 2021. <https://www.infobae.com/america/venezuela/2021/03/04/guyana-condeno-el-sobrevuelo-de-aviones-militares-de-venezuela-sobre-la-zona-en-reclamacion-de-ambos-paises/>

The overflight occurred after the Lady Nayera and Sea Wolf vessels returned to port together with the 12 Guyanese fishermen arrested on January 21 by Venezuela, accused by the government of that country of allegedly fishing in its jurisdictional waters, which caused new friction between the two countries.

Source: “Guyana denuncia que Venezuela detuvo a dos de sus barcos pesqueros (Guyana denounces that Venezuela detained two of its fishing boats),” *France24* (the state owned media company based in Paris with robust reporting throughout the region), 24 January 2021. <https://www.france24.com/es/am%C3%A9rica-latina/20210124-guyana-venezuela-disputa-maritima-detencion-barcos-pesqueros>

Two vessels registered in Guyana were detained...by the Venezuelan military in a maritime enclave of Guyanese sovereignty, according to the government of the former British colony. Through a statement, the Guyanese authorities classified the action as “a flagrant violation of their sovereignty and the fundamental norms of international law.”...There are links between what happened and the desire of the Venezuelan president, Nicolás Maduro, to establish a maritime demarcation that he would call ‘Territory for the development of the Atlantic Façade.’ This project would cover the waters belonging to Guyana and the territory west of the Essequibo River.