

Prevent Further War in Venezuela and End Unlawful Boat Strikes

On January 3, the administration violated Venezuela's sovereignty, abducting its president and his wife in an operation that *involved* 150 military aircraft and drones and resulted in the *death of 83 people*. This was an act of war, carried out in violation of U.S. and international law. If this had happened to the U.S. president, we would undoubtedly call it an act of war.

The administration has also continued to blow up boats in the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, deliberately killing more than 125 people outside of war in an illegal use of military force. The administration claims these actions will stop drug trafficking and protect Americans struggling with addiction. But these strikes will have *no impact* on the *flow of illegal narcotics* into the United States. Drug trafficking is a crime, and those suspected of committing it should be prosecuted. The summary execution of a criminal suspect without charge or trial—whether on the high seas or inside the United States—is an extrajudicial killing and is prohibited by both *U.S. statute* and *international law*.

Members of Congress should publicly oppose the unlawful boat strikes and support measures to prohibit funds being used for the unauthorized use of force against Venezuela because:

- » **Americans don't want another war:** Two-thirds of voters *did not approve* of the Maduro operation, with 72 percent *concerned* that the U.S. will become too involved in Venezuela. Americans have lived through the disastrous post-9/11 wars. They don't want another forever war.
- » **We are not at war with drug cartels—whether from Venezuela or elsewhere:** Drug trafficking, while harmful, is not an "*armed attack*" that allows a lethal response and the United States is *not at war* with any Latin American drug cartel. The president cannot unilaterally make this determination.
- » **Congress has the power of the purse and the responsibility to stop the unlawful use of military force:** Article I of the Constitution gives Congress the sole authority to declare war. Congress must act as a check on the president's unlawful military actions.

Cosponsor H.R. 6915 and S.J.Res. 3344 to prohibit U.S. funds being used for the unauthorized use of military force against Venezuela.

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