

Venezuela – Guaidó Planned To Use Arms – Frustration Over Stalemate Sets In



DISPATCHES FROM [MOON OF ALABAMA](#), BY "B"

HELP ENLIGHTEN YOUR FELLOWS. BE SURE TO PASS THIS ON. SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON IT.



The abject British publication The Economist, long a mouthpiece for the Transatlantic ruling class, and beloved by snobs, has already signed off on Guaidó as the coup's main Trojan Horse.



[dropcap]N[/dropcap]ew reports about the U.S. coup attempt in Venezuela describe the current mood in Washington as 'frustration'. They also shine new light on why of the opposition's plans failed.

When the U.S. set out for the failed 'humanitarian aid' stunt

at the border between Colombia and Venezuela an important role was given to its puppet, the self-declared 'president' Juan Guaidó. It was his task to bring the aid across the border.

The *New York Times* [reported](#) at that time:

*[One] option, pushed by those looking for a more direct confrontation with Mr. Maduro, would have activists encircle an aid truck in Colombia as it slowly makes its approach to Venezuela. Under this plan, protesters from Venezuela would overrun soldiers stationed on the Venezuelan side and allow the aid to move in, possibly using a forklift to push aside the containers blocking the bridge. In Curacao, opposition officials were buoyed by the willingness of the country's foreign minister to stage aid along a sea corridor long used by Venezuelan migrants to flee the country. **But in recent days, plans appeared to be falling apart as politicians in Curacao objected to the use of the aid as a political weapon.***

Additionally the opposition planned to receive the 'aid' [on the Venezuelan side](#):

Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido plans to head to the Colombian border in a convoy of vehicles on Thursday to receive humanitarian aid for his crisis-stricken nation, despite the objection of increasingly isolated President Nicolas Maduro.

...

He will undertake the 800-kilometer (497-mile) road trip from Caracas in the company of some 80 lawmakers from the opposition-controlled congress, which he leads, opposition legislators said.

...

"Through this call for humanitarian aid, the population will benefit from the arrival of these goods to the Venezuelan border," said opposition legislator Edgar Zambrano, as he waited in a plaza of eastern Caracas with other lawmakers to board buses.

While Guaidó traveled to Colombia, the convoy from Caracas to the border never materialized. The attempt by a few stone-throwing thugs to move two trucks with 'aid' across a bridge

failed when the Venezuelan National Guard simply blocked them. Riots ensued and the thugs used Molotov cocktails to set the trucks on fire.

The whole stunt comically [failed](#). But until today it was unclear why the issue was managed so badly.

Now *Bloomberg* [reports](#) that the real plan was quite different:

*Late last month, as U.S. officials joined Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido near a bridge in Colombia to send desperately needed aid to the masses and challenge the rule of Nicolas Maduro, **some 200 exiled soldiers were checking their weapons and planning to clear the way for the convoy.** Led by retired General Cliver Alcala, who has been living in Colombia, they were going to drive back the Venezuelan national guardsmen blocking the aid on the other side. **The plan was stopped by the Colombian government, which learned of it late and feared violent clashes at a highly public event it promised would be peaceful.***

...

Alcalá, the retired general, did acknowledge the plan to escort the aid across the border and said he understands why the Colombians wanted to avoid trouble.

It seems that the politicians in Bogotá did not object "to the use of the aid as a political weapon" as the *NYT* reported, but got cold feet over the plan, initially kept secret to them, to cross the border by military force. It would have been an overtly hostile aggression against its neighbor country, something that Colombia is very keen to avoid.



Military defectors. anyone? The whole interview could have been staged, or with actors. The uniforms' labels did not match the current insignia worn by the Venezuelan armed forces.

In late January CNN [talked](#) with uniformed young men who claimed to be defectors of the Venezuelan army. They begged the U.S. to supply them with arms and communication equipment. (How many did they receive?) But the uniforms they wore had the wrong markings. They showed a patch saying "FAN" which stand for Fuerzas Armada Nacional. Several years ago Venezuela changed the name of its armed forces into Fuerza Armada Nacional Bolivariana and all current uniforms show "FANB". It is possible though that the interviewed people were part of the 200 "exiled" defectors or mercenaries who were supposed to storm the border.

Bloomberg further reports that some important people are not happy with Guaidó's performance:

The U.S. officials who have driven the Venezuela policy -- Rubio, National Security Adviser John Bolton and special envoy Elliott Abrams -- continue

*to put on a brave face, increasing economic and diplomatic pressure and tweeting daily about Maduro's certain departure. **Behind the scenes, however, there is concern and dismay.***

...

[W]hen Guaido was in Colombia, its president, Ivan Duque, expressed frustration to him. Witnesses said Duque complained about the failure of Guaido's promise to bring tens of thousands of Venezuelans to the border to receive the humanitarian aid.

*There have been other concerns. Guaido was planning to make a tour of European capitals this week to build international support, but **the Americans told him** he needed to return to Venezuela or he'd lose whatever momentum remained.*

During his travel to several Latin American capitals Guaido was accompanied by the State Department's assistant secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Kimberly Breier. The Department [describes her](#) as "a policy expert and **intelligence professional** with more than 20 years of experience". She now seems to be Guaidó's personal minder.

The State Department's frustration that its plans failed are also visible in [this clip](#) from its press conference where the spokesperson scolded the media for calling Guaido "opposition leader" or "self-proclaimed president" instead of "interim president". AP's Matt Lee then reminds the spokesperson that some 140 countries simply do not recognize him as such.

Interestingly the State Departments own media outlet *Voice of America* used "self-proclaimed president" in at least two of its recent pieces.

Guaidó Calls for Protests in Venezuela Ahead of His Return

<https://www.voanews.com/a/guaido-calls-for-protests-in-venezuela-ahead-of-his-retur...>

VOA News Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed acting president Juan Guaidó (C) poses for a picture with a baby before leaving his hotel in Salinas, Ecuador, March 3, 2019. Share

Guaidó Calls Blockade of Aid for Venezuela a 'Crime Against ...

<https://www.voanews.com/a/guaido-on-us-sending-goods-to-help-venezuela/4/8127...>

VOA 1 - The Hits - Rey McDonald VOA Africa VOA1 - The Hits ... Venezuela's self-proclaimed president Juan Guaidó, arrives for a meet with university students at the Central University of ...

[bigger](#)

VOA then silently changed [those articles](#) to conform with the new "interim president" wording. It still uses "opposition leader".

The State Department's frustration will increase over [this prank](#) (audio) by two Russian comedians who phoned up Elliot Abrams and induced him to [demand the closing](#) of non-existing "Venezuelan accounts" in Switzerland:

The pranksters also held one more conversation with Abrams in March, according to Russia 24, where the Special Representative told them that the US is not planning military intervention in Venezuela, but would like to "make the Venezuelan military nervous," regarding possible guarantees ruling out military threats from the US to be "a tactical mistake." However, according to the phone call, Abrams said that the main sources of leverage against the Venezuelan government are still financial, economic and diplomatic pressure.

Guaidó's new order is to [incite a general strike](#) in Venezuela. The start though does not look encouraging:

Opposition leader Juan Guaidó stepped up efforts Tuesday to remove President Nicolás Maduro, meeting with public-sector unions and calling for rolling strikes in a bid to weaken the authoritarian government. Guaidó managed to draw about 100 leaders of state-employee unions to the session. But only a few hundred workers came, ...

...

One union leader at the meeting, Besse Mouzo, said the plan involved organizing work stoppages that would eventually lead to a general strike. "We have to begin by convincing people" to join the smaller strikes, she said.

That effort is not likely to go anywhere. Who would pay those workers if they were to do so?

Bloomberg also says that there are no plans for any open military aggression. The plan for now is to starve the people of Venezuela [into submission](#):

European and Latin American diplomats say they are preparing for a long and messy process in which Maduro stays in power despite an economy in tailspin. One Latin American diplomat said Maduro has learned from his patrons, the Cubans, about how to be resilient. Sanctions and international pressure may wind up strengthening his regime, at least in the short term.

Under economic sanctions the people dependent on the government for their needs. That is why sanctions never bring a government down and only hurt those who are already poor.

The situation is at a stalemate. The U.S. will increase sanctions. Venezuela will, like Iran and Syria, find ways around them. Years later nothing essential will have changed.

Guaidó may be an attractive looking man capable of charming officials in Washington. But he so far was not able to get anything done. He has only few followers and President Maduro simply ignores him.

This was not the plan when this 'regime change' operation started. Trump was promised a fast coup during which the military [would jump](#) to the site of the random guy the neoconservatives sold to him as "interim president". That did not happen. Plan B was the 'humanitarian aid' gimmick which went likewise nowhere. The idea to incite public sector workers to strike is also not realistic. There is no real military option.

How much patience will Trump have as the current situation festers? What will he do when it runs out?

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About the Author

"b" is Moon of Alabama's founding editor. He writes his dispatches semi-anonymously.



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