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Venezuela - Latest update



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We are grateful to our local correspondents Globalpandi in Venezuela who have provided an update on the current situation in Venezuela which is available [here](#).

And also to our local correspondents Venepandi who have provided the following;

As widely reported, on January 3, 2026, the United States conducted an aerial operation in Caracas aimed at the removal of Nicolás Maduro. The operation was brief (approximately 3 hours) and resulted in the capture and extraction of both Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. Both individuals are currently in New York facing judicial proceedings.

Following the power vacuum, the appointed Vice President has assumed the interim presidency. Furthermore, President Trump stated yesterday that Venezuela is currently under U.S. administration and that Vice President Delcy Rodríguez is following direct orders from the U.S. government during this transitional period.

Port Monitoring and Logistics

- Air Connectivity: Although some airlines have announced the resumption of flights, the latest official U.S. communiqué maintains February 2 as the scheduled date for the reopening of the airspace.
- Military Presence: Despite the White House discourse, there has been no observed landing or deployment of U.S. military personnel on Venezuelan soil.
- Ports and Navigation: National ports have been reassigned to Security Level 1 (ISPS). Non-sanctioned vessels are permitted to enter and depart; however, they remain subject to high-seas documentation reviews by international authorities. Also, we have learned that vessels currently undergoing loading operations are facing significant delays, as the Venezuelan maritime authority is not processing the mandatory inspections required for the harbor masters to grant sailing clearances.
- Commercial Operations: PDVSA has suspended all product purchase and sale operations. Regarding raw materials such as iron ore, purchase and export are permitted. However, despite a significant drop in prices, ship owners and charterers face considerable risks during the vessel's stay in port and upon departure.

In our assessment, the commercial situation is expected to stabilize within a period of one to two weeks. Regarding the political landscape, we have identified three primary scenarios based on their probability of occurrence. It is evident that if the first option materializes, sanctions could be lifted within a short timeframe.

Conclusion on Scenario Incidence

1. Negotiated Transition (50% probability):

This is the most likely scenario. The capture of Nicolás Maduro has created a genuine power vacuum. With the primary figure in custody in New York, the incentives for the remaining leadership—including the High Military Command and key political figures—to negotiate an institutional exit have increased drastically to avoid further enforcement actions by the Trump administration.

2. Continuity under Delcy Rodríguez (30% probability):

Although the Supreme Tribunal of Justice (TSJ) has designated her as interim president, her actual influence is moderate. Her viability depends exclusively on the recognition of the National Bolivarian Armed Forces (FANB). Should the military perceive that the cost of maintaining the current system is unsustainable given external pressure, this scenario will likely collapse in favor of a transition.

3. Prolonged Instability (20% probability):

There is a latent risk of resistance from irregular armed groups or radical factions. However, the impact of this is considered lower due to the loss of central funding and the disruption of the chain of command following the U.S. operation.

Immediate Outlook: The final outcome will be determined in the coming hours depending on the stance of the FANB. If the military leadership opts for a coexistence pact or amnesty with the sectors claiming the mandate of July 28, the Negotiated Transition scenario will become an immediate reality.

Clearly the situation in Venezuela remains extremely fluid and challenging for shipowners. Members looking to trade there are advised to exercise extreme caution and to contact the Club for specific advice if required.