

## Caracas Mayor Part of US Coup Plot

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Global Research, February 23, 2015

*Washington spent 16 years unsuccessfully trying to topple Venezuela's model democracy.*

On February 19, London's Guardian published an edited Venezuela Solidarity Campaign statement on its coup plot signed by 70 distinguished figures - including John Pilger and George Galloway.

The [unedited version](#) says:

"We the undersigned note with grave concern the announcement of the discovery of a plot to overthrow President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela in a coup on Thursday February 12."

"Government officials have said the plans included violent attacks on the presidential palace and other government buildings."

"The thwarting of this latest coup attempt comes as leaders of numerous Latin American countries have warned of a similar situation developing in Venezuela to that which preceded the coup against Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973, which led to the horrendous dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet."

"The Non Aligned Movement (118 nations) has also echoed Latin America's rejection of attempts to overthrow Venezuela's legitimate government."

"Sections of Venezuela's right-wing opposition have previously used violent and anti-democratic means to destabilise and seek to overthrow the country's elected Government, most notably the temporarily successful coup against Hugo Chavez in 2002, and many right-wing opposition groups in Venezuela committed to overthrowing the elected, constitutional Government continue to receive funding from the US."

"We call on all governments internationally to respect Venezuela's elected, constitutional Government and condemn this latest coup attempt."

Days earlier, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki called clear evidence of Washington's coup plot "ridiculous."

On Friday, she called coup plot accusations "false and baseless. We do not support a political transition in Venezuela by non-constitutional means."

"We are deeply concerned by what appears to be the Venezuelan government's efforts to escalate intimidation of its opponents by rounding up...prominent leaders of the opposition."

Obama administration neocons stop at nothing to achieve their imperial objectives - including replacing Venezuelan democracy with fascist rule.

[TeleSUR](#) said Caracas Mayor Antonio Ledezma (aka “the vampire”) was arrested for plotting with Washington against President Nicolas Maduro.

Venezuela authorities charged him with sedition and conspiracy involvement in the foiled plot revealed days earlier.

He co-wrote a so-called “transition (coup) plan” with Washington favorites/fascist figures Leopoldo Lopez and Maria Corina Machado.

Constitutional lawyer Jesus Silva called it “a putschist act of conspiracy that is unfortunately to the liking of thousands of opposition militants who have been indoctrinated to attack democracy.”

According to TeleSUR, “young opposition activist” Lorent Saleh involved in organizing violent street protests named Ledezma last August as a coup plotter.

On Thursday, Maduro said:

“Antonio Ledezma who, today, by order of the Public Prosecutor’s Office, was captured and is going to be prosecuted by the Venezuelan justice system, to make him answer to all of the crimes committed against the peace and security of the country and the Constitution...”

“We’ve had enough of conspiracies. We want to work in peace!” Don’t expect Washington’s foil plot to be its last.

[Venezuela Analysis](#) said although full coup plot details aren’t known, “it appears (Ledezma) is implicated beyond his call for a transitional government.”

Expect more arrests once more evidence is collected and announced, said Maduro.

“In these intelligence investigations, we have discovered a codified message, in another language, by an important leader of a party,” he explained.

“On translating it, we found that it gave the details, the elements of the coup.”

“We are about to capture the person who brought the script that they were going to read, the script they were going to read out was already written, and circulated by a person who I will name at the correct moment.”

Ledezma was implicated in the aborted April two-day coup against Hugo Chavez.

Last year, he was involved in plotting street violence. Venezuela Analysis said “(h)e planned to go on a killing spree with the help of Colombian paramilitaries, but was arrested before the plan could take place.”

He founded and heads Venezuela’s hard-right/fascist Brave People’s Alliance party.

## **A Final Comment**

Maduro said plans to kill him and topple his government were hatched in “Bogota, Madrid

and Miami.” For sure in Washington, as well as London and Ottawa.

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos denied involvement. Human rights groups say at least 9,000 political prisoners languish in Colombian jails.

Some organizations say around 22,000. Including trade unionists, human rights workers, independent journalists and political activists. Right-wing death squads kill with impunity.

According to Santos, “(t)here is no plot against any government from Colombia and, of course, if I learn about something specific in this regard, I will not only condemn but act with all the strength of the law.”

He expressed concern about Ledezma’s arrest. He believes currently incarcerated anti-government coup plotters should be released.

His support for hard-right opposition figures causes tensions between both countries. It won’t surprise if Maduro announces evidence implicating him and his government in Washington’s foiled coup plot.

British and Canadian involvement are known. Maybe Israel’s dirty hands.

A [New York Times](#) propaganda piece practically exonerated Ledezma despite his history of anti-government coup plotting.

Saying “his supporters rallied in the capital and...elsewhere.” His arrest “was viewed by the opposition as the kidnapping of a political rival to” Maduro.

His “backers called it another assault on democracy...(Maduro’s) desperate (effort) to divert attention from Venezuela’s internal ills and his own disapproval ratings...”

So he “concocted Mr. Ledezma’s arrest..” The Times quoted his lawyer, Omar Estacio, saying “(h)e’s content, in a happy state of mind and not scared of anything.”

So-called unnamed witnesses called his arrest “disproportionately severe.” Despite no evidence supporting their claims, they said he was “dragged...away to the intelligence agency’s headquarters.”

The Times quoted the State Department’s Big Lie about Washington “not promoting unrest in Venezuela, nor are we attempting to undermine Venezuela’s economy or its government.”

Times editors supported Washington’s April 2002 aborted two-day coup. It outrageously vilified Chavez throughout his tenure.

Bashes Maduro the same way. Consistently substitutes Big Lies for hard truths on Venezuela and all other geopolitical issues mattering most.

It relentlessly supports monied interests at the expense of popular ones. Vilifying Venezuela’s model democracy and Bolivarian fairness reflect longstanding Times policy.

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