

Map (and Objectives) of the Irregular War on Energy in Venezuela

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The latest evidence gathered by the Venezuelan government and presented on Monday, March 11, to the Venezuelan population about the attack on the national electricity system, allows us to reconstruct the multidimensional nature of the attack that was unleashed in the energy sector as part of the irregular war against Venezuela.

Less than a week after the cyber sabotage on the Simón Bolívar Hydroelectric Power Station located in the Guri reservoir, which cut off the supply of electricity to more than 80% of the national territory, also affecting the supply of drinking water, health centres, communications and electronic banking, the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela denounced the physical attacks on electricity substations that made difficult the job of the technical personnel of the National Electrical Corporation (Corpoelec) to restore the service.

The cyber-attack against Corpoelec's computerized centre in the Guri Complex hydroelectric plant and against the nervous centre in Caracas was followed by electromagnetic attacks and, simultaneously, sabotage of other backup infrastructure that [reversed](#) the recovery processes so as to ensure the general and irreversible collapse of the electricity supply.

It is crucial to point out that these attacks are not dislocated events of the road map for the development of an irregular war in an openly warfare phase against Venezuela, as Venezuelan authorities have repeatedly denounced.

The aggravation of the unconventional conflict against Venezuela would bring with it sabotage on a large scale in order to bring about the greater weakening of the security systems in Venezuela, which would be extended to the population through the degradation of the population's living conditions. Indispensable components to the "humanitarian crisis" and "inability" of the "usurpation authorities" to "protect" the Venezuelan population narrative; premise under which the U.S. government persists in acting.

Indeed, a week after the electrical attack on Venezuela, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said his country's government will insist on pushing through "humanitarian aid," now incorporating the input of the destruction of normality and the almost total breakdown of social cohesion in Venezuela as a consequence of the blackout.

Operational Map of the Physical Attacks on the Electricity System

The attacks described below occurred when power had been restored in the east and south of the country and while working on its recovery in the capital. At least five attacks on the national electricity system were recorded, according to information [provided](#) after that by

Communication Minister, Jorge Rodríguez.

On the other hand, there was a focus on direct sabotage, such as the one that took place through the explosion of the Alto Prado substation, which is located in Terrazas, the Club Hípico in the municipality of Baruta. When it caught fire in the early hours of Monday 11, it again left part of the city of Caracas [without electricity](#).

The sabotage of the Tocoa thermoelectric plant, located in Vargas, also took place. There they cut off the gas that supplies the station, causing an explosion and preventing its operation as a contingency element to the blackout inside the Venezuelan capital.

It is necessary to stop at this point to point out that a context of irregular war, such as the one already being waged against Venezuela, denying Caracas from having electricity has strategic value, not only because it is the most important hub of national politics, but also because it is the main centre of financial operations and of the extensive electronic payment systems for the country as a whole. The interruption of the flow of electricity and consequently of telecommunications and means of payment, would dramatically break down any sense of normality thus having a direct impact on the population.

Other electricity transformer explosions were reported in the interior of the country, mainly affecting the western region. In the municipality of Cabimas (Zulia) as well as in Cabudare (Lara) that are places where the complete restoration of the electricity system took a long time to materialize due to explosions in substations. Specifically in Zulia, the explosion was reported last Tuesday afternoon (March 12) in the Las Cabillas sector of the Cabimas municipality. This state has also suffered irregular violent actions that have affected several commercial areas.

Also in the Lara municipality of Cabudare, the explosion of the substation occurred on Monday 11, causing further delays in the restoration of electricity within that area.

Sabotage of Oil Installations: Objectives

On Wednesday, March 13, the explosion of two 250,000 barrels of diluent in two tanks took place in the state of Anzoátegui, specifically in the PDVSA Petro San Félix complex. PDVSA authorities announced through internal messages, barely hours after the event, that the explosion had all the signs of being sabotage. Diluents are hydrocarbon fluids (such as naphtha) that are used to dilute heavy oil and reduce its viscosity, thus facilitating the transportation of crude oil.

Venezuelan crude for export is mostly extra-heavy, between 9 and 15 API degrees, of high density. For their transportation, handling and dispatch, diluents are essential. They are also the basis of Venezuela's capacity to sustain or increase its production of crude oil.

The intermittent lack of these diluents has been one of the causes of the fall in oil production in recent years in Venezuela, as they had traditionally been supplied by the U.S. oil industry to Venezuela, and since the sanctions against the Venezuelan economy the country has had to resort to other suppliers in the midst of the financial boycott, thus affecting the smooth supply of that input to Venezuelan production.

The attack on Petro San Felix could be clearly understood within an agenda to degrade Venezuelan exports. It also contributes to partially disable the production of gasoline for the

domestic market, given that the systems for transporting and dispatching crude oil through pipelines to national refineries also depend on these diluents.

Recently, the financial firm Barclays estimated that by attacking the Venezuelan electricity system, the country could abruptly lose 700,000 barrels of oil production.

Although the Venezuelan authorities have not reported on this, it is true that oil production is associated with electricity flows and that the shielding of oil fields through on-site electricity generation could be partial and limited. The sustained loss of electricity means loss of compression injected into wells, indispensable for pumping crude oil. It is known that a loss of substantial production, as opposed to the current levels, would have extensive effects on national exports and the domestic supply of fuels.

It is therefore necessary to conclude that PDVSA is an essential target in the operational plan of war of attrition against vital services in Venezuela.

Precise Inputs and Actors of the Irregular War in Venezuela

Through successive events that have taken place in Venezuela, we can see that a series of asymmetric actions have been perpetrated aimed to increase the collapse, such as consecutive attacks on power stations in border states by irregular groups [coming from Colombia](#), theft of cables and strategic material in substations in the [western central region](#), and attacks on the electricity system that [have peaked](#) during electoral periods.

Minister Jorge Rodríguez has released figures illustrating the consequences of low-intensity operations, which seek to dismantle the electricity infrastructure, a strategic area for the normal functioning of a country, with the aim of providing more ammunition to justify foreign intervention.

These actions, which have a long history, have generated more than 200 people dead by electrocution, more than 150 damaged electricity substations and multimillion-dollar losses in specialized equipment. The constant terrorist attacks to the electricity system of the country have seriously deteriorated the infrastructure, which facilitated the work of generating a domino effect that would prolong the collapse of the services.

By the time the perpetrators gaining access to the nervous centre and being able to dislocate its operation, the whole system throughout the national territory had already been weakened.

In addition to assessing the response capacity of Venezuelan military institutions in the face of a possible war scenario, where this type of resources would be needed daily, the violation of security in the Guri was used to reactivate the propaganda campaign of the “humanitarian crisis” after the failure of the 23F. The New York Times disclosure of the fabrication of a false positive in the show of bringing in “humanitarian aid” by force exposed not only the Trump administration but also the Colombian government for their open involvement.

Then enters the scene U.S. intermediary, Juan Guaidó (politically diminished after 23F), to comply with the media phase of unconventional aggression, spreading deceptive explanations of a supposed energy crisis caused by the negligence of the Venezuelan state.

At the same time, Marco Rubio spreads [false figures](#) of deaths due to power failures and

incorrect information from affected stations and John Bolton is in charge of hiding the involvement of the United States by 'explaining' the reason for the blackouts "to years of corruption of Maduro, underinvestment and careless maintenance".

In addition, the U.S. takes advantage of the brief media trend enjoyed by the false news about what happens in Venezuela after the blackout, to tighten the financial siege and pressurise other nations to join as well.

The intellectual authors of Washington inflated the effects of the attack in order to use them both to transfer the blame on the government of Nicolás Maduro and to increase the economic and diplomatic pressures against Venezuela, rushing things through by the realization that the support to the "parallel government" of Guaidó and the aggressive tone against the legitimate presidency of Maduro at a global level is irretrievably losing strength, while internally, they have not managed to split the FANB is as to bring about "regime change".

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