

Transcript: Venezuela in Washington's Crosshairs, Webinar 3: Exposing the 'Donroe' Doctrine, How US attacks are reshaping the Americas

This is the transcript of the third of three webinars presented jointly in early January 2026 by Just World Educational and the Task Force on the Americas, and co-sponsored by the U.S. Peace Council, Code Pink, Veterans for Peace, and the Nicaragua Solidarity Coalition. Full multimedia records of all the webinars in this project can be found at [Bit.ly/VZ-learning-hub](https://bit.ly/VZ-learning-hub).

[Helena Cobban]

Hello everyone, *buenos días, marhaba, bonjour*, and all the rest of it. I'm Helena Cobban, the president of Just World Educational. Welcome to today's webinar, which is the third in the three-part series, Venezuela in Washington's Crosshairs, that Just World Ed is presenting jointly with the U.S.-based organization Task Force on the Americas. We're delighted that we have three guest speakers with us for today's discussion, which is titled Exploring the 'Donroe' Doctrine. They will be Michelle Ellner of Code Pink, the attorney Dan Kovalik, and Ajamu Baraka of Black Voices for Peace. They're waiting behind the scenes, or up in the gallery, or somewhere right now.

A big welcome to you all! Thank you so much for being with us.

Throughout this series, Roger Harris of the Task Force on the Americas and I are co-moderating the webinars, and I'm happy that today Roger will be the lead moderator.

Before I hand over to him, just a few quick housekeeping notes. One is to note that the multimedia records of the two earlier discussions in this series that we presented last week are already available on the learning hub that we've created for this project, which you can access here: [Bit.ly/VZ-learning-hub](https://bit.ly/VZ-learning-hub), and the records of today's conversation will shortly also be posted there. Be sure to share that link.

Be sure to share the link that goes to this rich trove of learning materials, with all your friends and networks.

Secondly, we have an experienced tech support person working with us behind the scenes, Mustafa Mohammed. If you have tech questions, please contact him via the chat box or if necessary via the Q&A.

Finally, we hope that there will be time to take questions from attendees. Please send in your questions written as succinctly as possible via the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen. So now, over to you, Roger.

[Roger Harris]

Thank you, Helena, and thank you for our co-sponsors, the U.S. Peace Council, the Nicaragua Solidarity Coalition, Code Pink, and Veterans for Peace. The subject of our webinar series is Venezuela, and Venezuela has been thrust into the position of

Washington's primary target. And fundamentally, it is in that position as the primary target of Venezuela for a crime, the crime of sovereignty, which the Yankee empire cannot tolerate.

The very reason the U.S. is bent on radical regime change for the South American nation is the reason why solidarity activists such as today's speakers support Venezuela. Venezuela represents an alternative to the U.S. imperial order. It is the hope for a better world.

The U.S. war against Venezuela has reached new heights, but it is a quarter of a century old. Throughout its existence, Venezuela's Bolivarian revolution has had to resist Washington's hybrid war, coup and assassination attempts, massive interference in elections, and truly catastrophic economic strangulation, the so-called sanctions, which are responsible for over 100,000 excess deaths. All of these failed because of the stalled political leadership and unity with the people and the military in Venezuela.

So, starting in September, the empire resorted to outright military tactics, clear acts of war, the extrajudicial murder of over 100 people in small boats. And when that failed, decapitation of its presidential leadership a week ago. And that failed.

The constitutional succession prevailed with Vice President Delce Rodriguez now serving as acting president. Our first presenter, and I'm so grateful for her to join us, is Michelle Ellner. Michelle is the Latin American campaign coordinator of Code Pink, one of the webinar's co-sponsors.

Michelle was born in Venezuela and has family there, and she studied international affairs at the Sorbonne in Paris, France. After graduating, she worked in an international scholarship program and was based in Caracas, in Paris, and she traveled extensively with that program. She later worked with community-based programs designed to promote productive endeavors in Venezuela, and then served as an analyst for U.S.-Venezuelan relations. But for the last week, she and so many Venezuelans in diaspora have just had almost no sleep. They've been organizing, protesting, being interviewed, and writing. So I'm especially grateful that Michelle could find the time to join us today.

So Michelle, tell us what happened when you first found the news that Mr. Trump had his press conference and that your president had been kidnapped.

[Michelle Ellner]

Yeah, well, first of all, thank you so much, Roger, and thank you to everyone that has joined us today, but especially those who have followed this series. I know that this is the third of the webinars that have been done about this. And yeah, this webinar that is called Breaking the Information Blockade, it's that for a reason, right?

So yeah, to answer this question, yes, I am a Venezuelan-American. I have all my family from my mother's side in Venezuela. My brother, who is a disabled person, was in Caracas at the moment.

So at first, when I learned what happened, at first, I thought, honestly, that it was a joke, that somebody was pranking me. And I couldn't believe that one country was capable of just

going to my other, my country, invading or bombing and kidnapping a sitting president. That was not something that I could believe at the moment.

Then I realized that I thought exactly the same when the U.S. took the Venezuelan embassy from Venezuelan people. I also thought that that was not possible, that the U.S. had to respect international laws. So of course, that came into my mind, and I said, well, maybe this is true, and this is not a prank.

Then I heard the president of this country talk about what they-- what he did. And then, of course, like, all the blood rushed through me. I thought about my brother.

I called everyone. My friends were, I'm sorry, this is a little, my friends were crying and not, like, believing that this was happening. So, yeah, it was very humiliating, basically, right?

So, and this is happening, and it's not just a military action that is happening.

It's also like a narrative warfare, right? And that's why this webinar is so important, and I really, really appreciate that you're here and that I was invited to talk here, because right now the U.S. public is basically being asked to look away and to accept simplified stories, to trust that the violence that is happening in Venezuela or that they're doing in Venezuela are carried out in their name, and that that's somehow necessary, inevitable, or even helpful, because some people do think it's helpful. So, yes, as Roger said, the United States carried out this operation in Venezuela that resulted in the kidnapping of President Nicolás Maduro, but also in the killing of more than 100 people in Venezuela, including soldiers, security personnel, allied forces, and civilians that were not engaged in combat.

They were not attacking anyone. They were not attacking, certainly, the United States. They were not threatening anyone, and they were not living in a declared war zone.

And this, really, I want to really emphasize this, because sometimes when they call this like a military operation and they talk about the military and not opposed to civilians, it sounds like it's reciprocal, you know, like it's expected, and as if those killed were like participants in a battle that they chose, and it's not, they were not. These were people that were going about their lives, they were on duty in their own country, under the assumption that they were not going to be bombed by a foreign power, people who expected to go home with their parents, with their child, with their sister, brothers, people who had no reason to believe that they were targets of war. So, this is like very important, because normalizing this language is part of how this violence is made acceptable.

And when this is like talked about a military action, it just stops talking about the human beings, human beings that were being killed that day. And that's why that press conference that you mentioned, Roger, was so difficult, because I heard the president talk about, we didn't lose any helicopters, we didn't lose any US soldiers, but 100 people, 100 or more were killed that day. Mainstream media and, you know, analysts, they just debate of whether this strategy was successful, if it's going to, if it's smart, if it's not smart, if it's legal, not legal, but nobody talks about, you know, or gives attention to the lives that were lost that day, the families that were affected, and the violence that was imposed on people who never consented to war.

Because this is not a declared war, there was no congressional authorization, there was no imminent threat. And yet, you know, lethal force was used, made it seem like it was normal, or routine, or I don't know. So yeah, this, listening to the president that day, I felt humiliated, and enraged.

And I think that a lot of people in the country felt that way. And I'm sorry that. So yeah, Venezuela has for many, many years been framed as, you know, not as a country with 30 million people that are incredible.

And I wish you knew at least one Venezuelan, to know that I'm not lying. But it's being framed basically as a criminal enterprise. And what officials are calling like a narco state, or like it was run by drug cartels, you know, and not, you know, not a government.

And that framing has been crucial to prepare the public to accept that violence that was carried out. And that's what brings us to this, the whole theme of this webinar, the Monroe Doctrine. The original Monroe Doctrine said that, you know, that Latin America was a US sphere of influence. And basically, Washington had the right to intervene whenever it decided that any affair was threatening US interest. So it was not really protection, but control.

Over the years, US or some US politicians have said that the Monroe Doctrine is obsolete, that it belonged to another era. But the reality is that it has never ended. Like US intervention in Venezuela, for example, it has been bipartisan. It is a bipartisan project. Even Democrats and Republicans administrations have imposed sanctions, have supported regime change operations or efforts. And even both of them recognized the self-proclaimed unelected president of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó.

The only thing that is changing right now is not the goal, but the method. Because under Trump, he's taking this logic like further, right, like more aggressively, and with no restraints, basically. This regarding diplomatic language, or, you know, it's acting basically as a bully in using force as, you know, a tool for US policy. And what is important is how this is sold to the public.

As I said before, Venezuela has been portrayed as a narco state, terms like, you know, "*cartel de los soles*," "narco terrorism". This has been routinely said, like to describe Venezuela. And these terms are not accidental, because they draw into two powerful emotional frameworks in the United States.

The post 9-11 war on terror, and the opioid crisis, right? Because after 9-11, people American here, they were trained to associate certain words like terrorism, or threats, security, Code Red, Code Orange, all of that to add urgency and, you know, in fear. So these words are, were used to justify endless war abroad, but also like expanded surveillance here at home.

And at the same time, the opioid crisis has caused real pain to American families in this country. And, you know, families that have lost loved ones due to the drugs, communities that have been devastated. So when officials link Venezuela to drug cartels, they are, you know, basically tapping into that grief and anger.

And they, uh, you know, make this combination. It's really powerful, because it's weaponizing the fear and the trauma and the loss, to manufacture the consent that they need from the American people to coercion, to military action, without any proof. This is basically replacing the evidence, or, you know, or making anything that is supposed to be legitimate. So that has been important.

But then we see now that most of the claims that the United States administration said about Nicolás Maduro being the leader of the so-called *Cartel de los Soles*, uh, we see that now those claims have disappeared from, from the recent U.S. indictments. Because that cartel narrative just prepared the ground to make this violence necessary and make it feel reasonable, as I said before, making military force acceptable, as I said before. But it was not going to hold up in court, because everyone I think here, uh, us at Code Pink, analysts, you know, like even intelligence reports from this own government have said over and over and over again, that the *Cartel de los Soles* does not exist, as it was presented.

So it was never about, like a criminal, or it was never about drugs, it was really about power and control over resources. It was about political alignment. And it was also about sending a message to the global, at least to leaders of the Global South, of what happens when, when your country basically refuses to submit.

President Maduro has, had been working around sanctions and making, you know, exchanging in another currency, etc. So weakening, if we can say, the power of the dollar, and making basically sanctions useless. So President Trump had to send a message that that is basically unacceptable.

So the other thing that I wanted just to say, I don't know how many minutes I still have, but we have to act now because what's happening in Venezuela is not going to stay in Venezuela. If the US can, you know, violate sovereignty, ignore international law, and carry out military actions without congressional approval here, it's just going to set a precedent that this can be done anywhere against other countries, and ultimately us, using the same framework, right, the same narco-terrorism framework, it can happen everywhere. Already organizations in the US that oppose US wars are being harassed and called, you know, terrorists, or even, you know, domestic terrorism is being used here and there to justify even the killing of an innocent American person by ICE in Minneapolis.

So, you know, we have to know that this that is happening in Venezuela is a testing ground, and we have to fight against that. If not, it's going to ultimately come back to dissent here at home. So there's a war powers resolution right now advancing in Congress, and it matters because it's one of the few, you know, tools that exist.

And, you know, I think that one of the things that we can do is call our senators right now and ask them to sign that war powers resolution. And then, just to end, I want to say that sometimes you will hear conversations about Venezuela that, you know, about Maduro or about the political conflicts. And, yes, there is polarization in Venezuela.

There is, you know, economic hardship, that is true. But it is very important to say that none of it justifies US intervention. Venezuelans don't want US intervention.

Venezuela wants to resolve their problems on their own. Venezuelans want the US to leave them alone. And, you know, regime change has never, ever, ever brought any type of help to any country we've seen in Libya, we've seen in Haiti, in Afghanistan.

And then, just to end, just to say this: Venezuelans, they're not passive victims. Don't see them like that, please. These are, Venezuelans are people that are, you know, have a long history of organizing, of resistance, of political consciousness.

And they are defending their sovereignty right now. They're on the streets, they're mobilizing, they're closing ranks. And they have made clear that they're not going to surrender their country to foreign domination.

So it is our responsibility here in the belly of the beast, or in the heart of the empire, to stop this right now before it escalates. Thank you so much.

[Roger Harris]

Thank you so much. Our next speaker is Dan Kovalik. Dan is an international human rights and labor rights lawyer.

He is currently representing Colombian President Gustavo Petro in the United States. Dan has represented governments and labor organizations in international forums, including, I believe, at least two addresses to the UN Security Council. He is the author of 10 books, including works on Venezuela, on Iran, Syria, and Palestine, and just mentioned a few of his books.

So Dan, please follow up. Comrade Michelle mentioned some very good things, and I know you have a lot more to say.

[Dan Kovalik]

Thank you, Roger and Michelle and everyone. Yeah, we live in very dark times, I guess. That's pretty obvious.

As Roger opened up and Michelle explained, the war against Venezuela has been going on since the Chavista revolution, which began in 1998 when Hugo Chavez was elected president. And it bears repeating that he was elected president because you'll sometimes see the mainstream press claims that he came to power through a coup, which is not true. In fact, one of the main priorities of the Chavista revolution, which is often not discussed because it goes against the Western narrative on Venezuela, is that one of the big priorities of Chavez was to bring democracy, true democracy, to Venezuela, which it had not had because really for about 100 years prior to Chavez's election, Venezuela was a vassal of the United States.

It was not a banana republic, it was an oil republic. Its entire economy was engineered by the US, the IMF, the World Bank, to be essentially a gas station for the West and to allow Western companies to benefit from Venezuela's resources. Chavez, you know, obviously one big piece of the Chavista revolution was to use Venezuela's oil wealth for the benefit of the people through social programs, housing.

I've lost count, but the last time I was counting, over 5 million low-income homes have been built in Venezuela. And I always point out, you know, the last I checked, there's about 30 million people in Venezuela, probably less at the moment because there has been a big migration from there, so anywhere from 25 to 30 million people. You figure an average family of four in 5 million housing units, that's 20 million people.

I mean, that's darn near the whole country that's gotten affordable housing since Chavez became president. Free health care was instituted, infrastructure, very important infrastructure was built, it didn't exist before. I mean, one small example, the lifts, the ski lifts [funiculars] up to the barrios, the poor barrios.

It used to be that to get from the poor barrios down into Caracas would take hours, you know, getting a bus or whatever. And now Chavez linked the center city to the barrios through these, I'm forgetting the name they call them at the moment, it escapes me, but these essentially ski lifts that go up into the barrios. But everyone knows about the social programs being a linchpin of the revolution.

But one thing, as I mentioned, was democracy as well. So in the first year of Chavez's presidency, 1999, he convened a constitutional assembly to rewrite the constitution. People from around Venezuela were able to contribute to the substance of the constitution.

It was approved by referendum. And a big thing that constitution did was to make Venezuela true democracy. It created an elaborate electoral structure that guaranteed reliability and accountability and verification for elections.

Of course, remember that in 2012, former President Jimmy Carter would say that Venezuela had the best electoral system in the world. Again, these are facts that go against the claim that somehow Chavez was a dictator and Maduro was a dictator. In fact, it's just the opposite.

When the United States got its way very briefly in 2002 by helping to overthrow Hugo Chavez, he was forcibly removed by the military and the right wing was put in power. What did the right wing do immediately? They threw the constitution out the window.

They disbanded the Supreme Court, disbanded the National Assembly. Essentially, they destroyed every democratic institution. And you had papers like the *New York Times* that applauded this as a version of democracy when it was the opposite.

Thankfully, Chavez was brought back to power in two-plus days because the people from the barrios came down to the center city and demanded his return. That was the true flowering of democracy, in fact. Venezuela has been fighting for its life ever since, fighting brutal sanctions that Obama started to impose under his administration and that Trump really escalated in 2017.

As Roger said, after those 2017 sanctions were imposed, the revenue of Venezuela was brought to about zero. And as Roger said, estimates in the first two years only of the sanctions, 2017 to 2019, was that 100,000 people died due to the sanctions. So, you know, it's certain tens of thousands or more died after that period as well, from the inability to get

medicines that they were denied, medical equipment that was denied, food that was denied.

There were some very dark times in Venezuela at the beginning of that sanctions regime, literally and figuratively, a lot of blackouts as well. And I want to mention that when people talk about interference in elections and electoral fraud, there's no greater interference in an election than another country like the United States putting a gun to the heads of the voters of Venezuela and saying, if you vote the wrong way, we're going to continue these sanctions that are killing you and that are impoverishing your nation. That is election interference.

That is the biggest threat to democracy that Venezuela has faced. And that is, of course, the one that is never discussed. It's been actually a miracle that the revolution has maintained itself through these sanctions, through the threats, through the propaganda, and of course, now through the kidnapping of the president and his wife.

But indeed, the revolution survives. Delcy Rodriguez is president. She has said she will continue the policies of Nicolás Maduro.

So the regime change for the moment has failed. I mean, that's obvious. What is Trump's next move then?

Is he going to kidnap Delcy Rodriguez? I mean, this is absurd. You could go on and on.

You know, you're going to have to kidnap the next 20 people online. So the good news is the revolution survives. But the bad news is I don't think the U.S. is through. They're going to find more ways to harass Venezuela and also to harass Cuba. I mean, obviously, Trump is being very open about his desire to, he thinks, he smells blood in the He thinks Cuba is right for regime change. There's no question Cuba is in very bad shape economically, again, due to the brutal sanctions imposed on that country, the blockade imposed on that country, the longest blockade in world history that's been imposed since the early 1960s after the revolution of Fidel Castro.

But definitely, the U.S. right now sees, at least believes, it has an opportunity to roll back the progressive revolutions in countries like Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, and even the progressive government in Mexico. I just saw before I jumped on the webinar that Mexico is sending troops to a border area along the Gulf of Mexico, fearful that Trump may invade there. And so that, you know, so when we talk about the Monroe Doctrine, so what are we talking about?

As Michelle said, the original Monroe Doctrine from 1823 essentially announced that the U.S. had sole prerogative of influence in the Western Hemisphere, and that was aimed towards Europe. It was basically telling Europe, get out. Okay, we're going to, the U.S. is going to run the hemisphere, it's going to run Latin America. If it wants a canal built, it's going to build that canal and it's going to control it. And then there was the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, that was the Teddy Roosevelt Corollary, which essentially said that the U.S. had the right to use military force to enforce the Monroe Doctrine, which Teddy Roosevelt was very willing to do, as was his predecessor, William McKinley, as well as shown in the so-called Spanish-American War, which was really the U.S. conquering of countries like Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines and Guam. So what is the, and as

Michelle said, those, both those, the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary there, too, have never stopped. They have continued to this day.

After World War II, I think most of the Monroe Doctrine was implemented mostly through covert operations in Latin America through the CIA, through proxy forces like the Contras, through death squads that the U.S. began using in 1962, explicitly using through, as part of John F. Kennedy's so-called National Security Doctrine. Those death squads continue to haunt countries like Colombia, for example, with huge casualties, of course.

But again, most of that was covert. Americans, most Americans didn't even know it was happening. Governments were overthrown.

In quick succession, and Americans didn't know that their government had anything to do with it. In fact, they were just given the impression, certainly I did as a child going to school, that Latin America was just a very unstable place, and presidents would come and go. And I didn't realize that it was my country that was responsible for overthrowing all those presidents.

But again, mostly covertly, but not totally. You had, except for the United States, with Lyndon Johnson's invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965. Of course, the invasion of Grenada in 1983 by Ronald Reagan.

The invasion of Panama in 1989 by George H.W. Bush. And the kidnapping, of course, then of President Noriega, who was kidnapped and brought to the U.S., also alleging he was a drug trafficker, which actually was true in his case. But he was doing it on the behest of the CIA.

He was a CIA asset. And at the time, the CIA was selling cocaine to fund the Contras in Nicaragua. Or Noriega's great sin that led to the invasion was that he announced he was going to stop supporting the Contra campaign in Nicaragua and he was not going to allow Panama anymore to be used as a staging ground against Nicaragua.

That's what got him kidnapped. Then, of course, you had in 2004, France, Canada, and the U.S. combined to kidnap Father Aristide in Haiti and put him on a plane and send him to the Central African Republic. Another kidnapping.

And that brings us to today and the latest, very overt form of, at least, regime change attempt by the U.S. in furtherance of the Monroe Doctrine. I would say that the Monroe Doctrine is not a change in really the essence of what the Monroe Doctrine is. It's more of a change in, I would say, aggressiveness.

I would say this is maybe the most aggressive manifestation of it, certainly since the turn of the 20th century, where multiple countries are being threatened with overt regime change, with military action, with Trump even suggesting Marco Rubio may have a new job as president of Cuba, this sort of thing. I think it is important to talk about what that means at home, that not only is international law being eroded through these actions by the U.S. and Latin America, domestic law is being eroded very purposefully by, for example, as we know, these ICE raids, these ICE killings. Thirty-two people have been killed so far by ICE since Trump took office.

And it's not, well, at first, it seemed to be limited mostly to Latin Americans. Now, of course, Somalis are being attacked. And even white American citizens.

And I think that ultimately, the goal is to create a shock, you know, troop system to govern the United States. I think you're seeing the end, really, as some are calling it, the post-constitutional United States. And I think all these things are connected.

When you can just murder fishermen in the Caribbean on the mere allegation that they're drug traffickers, then there's nothing to prevent that force from murdering Americans and detaining Americans without due process. And that's exactly what we're seeing. So the need to resist is important, not just for Latin America and the Caribbean, but for the United States, for the people of the United States.

Thank you very much.

[Roger Harris]

Thank you, Dan. And we'll be coming back to Dan and Michelle, along with our next speaker, when we open it up for dialogue between the speakers and then Q&A. But our next speaker is Ajamu Baraka.

Ajamu is a leader in the Black Alliance for Peace. And that is a people-centered human rights organization founded to revive the anti-war, anti-imperialist, and pro-peace traditions of the black radical movement in the United States. He was the Green Party's vice presidential candidate in 2016.

And he's a leader in the U.S. Peace Council, one of our webinar co-sponsors. He's also one of the leading geopolitical analysts today. And I'm very happy to welcome Ajamu.

[Ajamu Baraka]

Thank you so much for the generous introduction, Roger, and thank all of you responsible for this very, very important series. Through this series, we have learned a lot. We have strengthened our foundation.

So there's not much more that we need to say. We will just touch on a few points in terms of the rationale for why we're doing this and the objective conditions that we find ourselves in. But more importantly, what is to be done?

In particular, what should be done by those of us who are in the belly of empire, those of us who are citizens and residents of a state that is basically operating as a rogue state beyond the boundaries of international law, that has demonstrated quite clearly that it has no constraints and that it is dedicated to pursuing its particular interests regardless of the consequences? And it's that last point that we have to emphasize, because we have done a lot of analysis. There's not much more I can say from the previous two speakers and the speakers that preceded us in the first couple of sessions.

But the points that I will remind us of is this. First, the intent of the Trump administration is quite clear. They have said it.

When Trump announced the change of the Department of Defense to the Department of War, he was quite clear what the strategy was going to be, what the emphasis was going to be. It's not an accident that when they made that change, he said regarding the domestic environment that with his order to deploy the Gestapo forces known as ICE, along with the National Guard in places like Chicago, that the residents of Chicago will soon understand why they call it the Department of War. That basically he declared war on the citizens and residents of this state.

The same can be said when we look at the policies abroad, policies that the foundation has been laid or was laid by all of the previous administrations, policies that clearly recognize that with the slippage, with the relative decline of U.S. power, economic, political, social, culturally, that there was going to have to be a more direct dependence on the use of coercive power. That was clearly reflected, for example, in the administration of one of the most aggressive presidential administrations during the period after the Second Imperialist War, known as the Second World War. That administration was, in fact, the Obama administration.

The foundation for the use of naked force, along with the continuation of the experimentation with so-called soft power, continued. But what we had was the naked use of U.S. aggressive force, informed by a toxic, aggressive, dangerous concept called full-spectrum dominance. That the administration, the state, was committed to a program, a doctrine, in which it was going to exercise all powers that it had access to, to ensure the continuation of U.S. dominance. They made that assertion, my friends, because they recognized that there was slippage, that there was a decline, that they had competitors that did not allow them to operate in the same way that they operated before 2007. The crisis of 2008 clearly exposed the contradictions, the limitations of U.S. economic power, and it demonstrated that if the field, if the international markets, if international capitalism would be allowed to proceed according to the theories taught in economics across this country, which is really bullshit theory, that the U.S. would, in fact, lose and was losing. And therefore, this fallback to extra-legal and military means in order to advance the interests of the U.S. capitalist class had to be embraced. And that is the foundation that we find ourselves today, with the Trumpian Declaration of War on the residence of this country and the entire planet. Part of the declaration and the failure of the attempt to try to dislodge Venezuela, the failures that they have experienced in terms of the inability to impose themselves through the combination of so-called smart power and higher power, is now the complete and utter commitment to naked aggression. And understand this, this is a position that is where there's consensus among the capitalist class.

We have to say this, my friends, because this notion that let's just engineer a change in the configuration of power in the Congress here this year in 2026. Let's bring back the Democrats in 2026 and in 2028. Well, my friends, there's no return to a normal because the normal has shifted.

There is no return to the good old days because the good old days never really existed. That there is this commitment on the part of the state for full-spectrum dominance, for militarism, because they don't see any other way forward. And we have to understand that and fashion our political responses with that understanding in mind.

What we have with the targeting of Venezuela is part of their desperate strategy, that they recognize that their ability to try to maintain and even expand global hegemony is limited, but that if they have any success at all, they need to proceed from a foundation of strength. And what do they mean by that? Well, they said what they need to do is to consolidate their base.

And what is their base? It's quite clear. They said in their national security strategy that their base is in fact the entire Western hemisphere, the Americas being key.

Well, what is the key to controlling the Americas and the progression of the trajectory of progressive politics in the Americas? It is to control and to contain Venezuela. So the target had to be to undermine, to control, to destroy the Venezuelan project.

The objective was to, of course, shore up their base, but the objective had a secondary objective, and that is to do what? Push out the Chinese, if possible, and to focus their full weight of their repressive apparatus on the Cubans and eventually again on Nicaragua. They declared, again, national and class war.

And again, we have to recognize that that defines the terms of struggle and it defines for us what we have to consider in terms of what we are doing. What we are seeing in my friends is the consolidation of global fascism. Global fascism.

Fascism is what fascism ultimately, if you understand it in class terms, is the expression of the most militant aspect of the capitalist class. It is a capitalist reform, if you will. It is a recognition that all of the elements of the liberal democratic processes, liberal democratic rights have to be jettisoned because they now are a yoke for the continuation of the rule of capital.

That's why we see the constitutional crisis that they're not talking about as a constitutional crisis in the United States of America. That's why we see the United Nations being reduced to almost complete irrelevancy. The Security Council comes together to discuss Venezuela, a day of speeches, no resolution at all.

We see what happened on November 17th when the Security Council came together to basically reaffirm and to support this so-called peace process in Gaza. That that was a day in infamy. That basically this represented to us the consolidation of the fascist control of all of the major structures and international institutions by the fascist United States of America.

When we put all this together, my friends, and realize what we are up against, then we have to understand and discuss what we need to do. We've got to build new structures of opposition. We've got to have explicitly anti-imperialist politics.

We have to challenge our friends, neighbors, colleagues who still want to embrace the idea that reform is still possible, who will find themselves on the same side of imperialism because they make the fatal mistake of instead of keeping the focus on their own state, the U.S., their own government, when there is this conflict between the U.S. state and another sovereign nation, in this case, Venezuela, that instead of looking at and demanding a break on U.S. intervention, U.S. power, they instead want to engage in these truncated, torturous

conversations about the nature of the process in Venezuela. We've seen this happen over and over again.

Nicaragua, Bolivia, you name it, and the arrogant left in the U.S. and the West, instead of them taking a principled position against imperialism, they engage in these conversations where ultimately they end up on the same side with imperialism, but with the leftist explanation. We've got to call bullshit for what it is and call it out. We know it's a difficult conversation, but a conversation we must have.

We can't play with this any longer. We are in a period of consolidating fascism, and we have to accept that and understand that. It's going to be dangerous for all of us.

This is the phase that we are in. Now, I believe, and we believe at the Black Alliance for Peace, that ultimately we will prevail. There's no question about that, but it will be difficult before it gets better.

We need to embrace and understand what needs to be done in terms of building new kinds of and more effective international organizations, of moving from just anti-war to explicitly anti-imperialism, centering our understanding of the material interests driving U.S. policy. The moves by Donald Trump and that administration, it's not the moves of a lunatic. They're quite clear.

There's a logic. There's a colonial imperialist logic to what they are, in fact, doing. Okay.

Venezuela had to be destroyed because Venezuela served as not only the grounding for left politics in the Americas, but they had done something. They had done something that other states had not done. They had proven that even with maximum pressure, with maximum sanctions, that they can still survive.

They were selling their oil. That example, that model had to be destroyed. As I close, let me just say, as we close out and go to our questions and answers, that basically we have some serious work to do.

We know that it's going to be difficult, but we say that the overextension of these forces, the real limitations on their power suggest to us, and the slogan that the Black is Back Coalition emphasized or highlighted, we say, turn imperialist wars into wars against imperialism. That is our task. That is our responsibility.

We've got to embrace that and carry it out with boldness and confidence. Thank you.

[Helena Cobban]

Well, thank you so much, Ajamu Baraka and all of our participants. Could I invite everybody to come back in? How do we do that?

I tell you what, I think I just end the spotlight system. Maybe I'll do that. Great.

Okay. If you could unmute.

[Roger Harris]

Michelle and Dan, if you could open your video.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah. Dan, if we could have you with us, that'd be great. Anyway, we have some great questions.

I have some great questions in my head about this.

[Roger Harris]

Okay. Thank you.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah. So, I have many questions in my mind about the role of the United Nations, the role of the BRICS Bank, the role of the US media. But first, I'm not sure how long Michelle can be with us, but there is a question about the *colectivos* in Venezuela.

I'd love it if you could answer that one and then stick around for as long as you can.

[Michelle Ellner]

Amazing. Yes. Yeah.

The question is, talk about the *colectivos*, which is now what we are hearing on the news. I want to make something clear that this is not something new. The *colectivos* did not suddenly appear in response to this moment.

They have existed for decades in Venezuela, and it's part of the social and political fabric. The *colectivos* in Venezuela, they emerge in working class, in marginalized communities. It's a form of grassroots organizations, and it's spaces where people are organized.

It could be around culture, it could be around education, food access, neighbor mediation, even protection, self-protection. So, this is not new, and it's also not new the way that the word *colectivos* is being used to generate fear. That is not new either.

In fact, I remember in 2019, when the US government illegally seized the Venezuelan embassy in Washington, DC, a lot of activists from Code Pink and many, many other organizations came to the embassy to defend the embassy, and our late comrade Kevin Seeds proposed the name *colectivos*, Embassy Protection Collective. Because of this, it's because the word collective is actually people coming together to defend the community, to defend a space, a principle, etc. So, we called ourselves the Embassy Protection Collective to counter this narrative that the *colectivos* in Venezuela were a terror group.

So, as I said, at this moment, already the US was using this word to imply danger, illegitimacy inside Venezuela, and as I said, this *colectivos*, they're a community. It's basically a community. So, what is happening now is that word, again, is being weaponized to generate fear, and it's being fed through the media, through reports that are basically, I

read today a report, an article on Times, and everything they were talking about was anecdotes, was rumors.

There's no verified reports, no independent documentation, no confirmed evidence, absolutely anything that there is something to fear about colectivos right now. So, what I could say to the people, please don't let the mainstream media or the government, those warnings, we have seen them before with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Code Red, Code Blue, colectivos, narco-traffickers, *cartel de los soles, tren de agua*, please, please don't let them weaponize your minds and your hearts with this fear. This is just made to shut down your critical thinking and make it feel like it's necessary, an intervention in the country, and I think we owe it to the Venezuelan people and to ourselves more than that.

So, yes, don't just listen to mainstream media, there are other places where you can get your information.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah, that's great. Thank you, Michelle. Definitely, Leonardo Flores told us this last week, you know, don't believe a thing you read in the corporate media, which we all need to be reminded because it's so pervasive.

We have some great questions in the Q&A if anybody else wants to have a question in there, we won't be able to get to all of them, but we will be picking through them. I just want to throw out there for Ajamu and Dan a question that I have based on, actually-- Ajamu started to talk about it-- the effect that the November 17th decision at the UN Security Council to adopt the whole of the misnamed US peace plan for Gaza, the effect that that has had on the whole international kind of atmosphere and the rest of the UN, and the rest of the Global South. You know, there has not been any pushback that I've seen at the United Nations against that terrible decision, as you said, a day that lived in infamy. So Dan or Ajamu or Michelle, can you quickly talk about the UN?

Does it have a role to play? Or should we just, as Ajamu was saying, look to build alternatives?

[Dan Kovalik]

Can I?

[Ajamu Baraka]

Oh, go ahead. No, no, go ahead.

[Dan Kovalik]

Well, I was just going to say, obviously, that the decision of the Security Council in that regard, I think was a huge defeat for humanity. And I think the Chinese and Russian abstentions will be come to haunt them. I think that that I could only describe the abstentions as being treacherous.

I feel very disheartened by that. And I think the resolution was introduced with the intention to preempt a Uniting for Peace resolution at the General Assembly, because a Uniting for Peace resolution, which Gustavo Petro, for example, was pushing, would allow the General Assembly essentially to order enforcement mechanisms in Gaza, including military intervention to protect the people of Gaza in the event that the Security Council can't reach unanimity. That's how the Uniting for Peace resolution is written. Well, once the Security Council passed this resolution, the first resolution to be passed by the Security Council on the Gaza genocide, the ability of the General Assembly to do a Uniting for Peace resolution essentially withered away.

And again, I think that was intentionally done. And as you say, the reaction of the world community has been muted. I mean, the genocide continues in Gaza, and yet there's very little discussion of it on the international stage.

And of course, now you had an attempt to do something with the Venezuela situation, the Security Council, but the US is able to veto that. I still think there is a role for the UN, but I think it needs to be reformed. There's discussions about doing that.

And one big way it's being discussed to reform it is to increase the number of members on the Security Council and require at least, say, two vetoes to effectively kill a resolution, which would really change things quite a bit. But as it stands, the UN does seem entirely without power. And the Gaza situation obviously has made that pretty evident.

[Helena Cobban]

Thank you. Yes. Ajamu, do you want to add anything? You already said some good things, but more?

[Ajamu Baraka]

Well, I mean, I think Dan covered most of it. Basically, this is why we embrace the concept of people-centered human rights, where the legitimacy of human rights, for example, emanates from the people and not from the states. We support the principles reflected in the UN charter, but we see that politically these tragic decisions have been made by powerful countries has basically undermined the credibility of that structure, that institution.

It still can be used, but it's going to require a real commitment to its own principles and ideals. And right now, we don't see much evidence that any of the states seem to be committed to that.

[Helena Cobban]

That kind of leads to another question that we have from Susan Scott in the Q&A, who is saying, what role can CELAC, which is the community of Latin American and Caribbean states, play? If they have a role to play, it's much more focused than the OAS or the UN, both of which we know are essentially US-dominated right now. Dan, do you have anything?

Oh, hey, you have a friend [his cat.] Nice to see your friend.

[Dan Kovalik]

Thank you. Thank you.

[Helena Cobban]

So yeah, just like Venezuela's neighbors and other Caribbean countries, Colombia, I know you obviously have good links with Colombia, but can you tell us that anything can be done at that regional level?

[Dan Kovalik]

Yeah, I mean, they could act, I suppose. I mean, they're not like the OAS in that they're not a regional body created pursuant to the UN Charter. I mean, they don't have the power to, official power to order, for example, some sort of military action.

But I, you know, informally, I mean, but so what? I mean, if they decided to do it, I suppose they could. I mean, they certainly should do something to oppose what's happening, you know, to show some unity against the attack on Venezuela and the threatened attacks on so many of these other countries.

I mean, but also, yeah, what is the OAS doing, right? I mean, this should be a matter of alarm at the OAS. And I've heard not a peep out of it.

I mean, our institutions are failing us. There's no question about that.

[Ajamu Baraka]

There's no question, too, that you're right. And we haven't heard much from the OAS because they've been compromised for quite some time, as you know. And even within the framework of CELAC, there's no consensus on taking a resolute stance against the United States of America.

There are a number of states in CELAC that have, in fact, given their support to the militarization that's taking place in our region. So the work that we have to do is monumental. Now, we had a CELAC meeting in Colombia a couple of months ago.

I have more faith in the CELAC Social, that is the gathering of the social movements and the articulation of the principles that CELAC should be about, which, of course, are very, very clearly anti-imperialist. So again, not to advance this mindless abstract cliches, but the power of the organized people are going to be the critical element here. Those organized people can, in fact, put pressure on their states.

But we have the ability to express opposition, just like we have the ability to express opposition to what is happening off the coast of Venezuela with the guns still to the head of the government officials in Venezuela. And we're doing that. We're organizing weeks of action and days of action, and people are beginning to focus on those pressure points like the U.S. embassies. And so, again, we've got to demonstrate that we have the ability and we

have the will to resist these criminal elements. John, could you elaborate on the zone of peace? One of the instruments that has become very, very important recently in the last few years was to revive the declaration that came out of CELAC in 2014 in Havana, calling for our region.

We say our region because we have to build what we refer to as an American-wide consciousness, that we are part of the so-called Americas. It was a resolution that declared that we want this region to be a zone of peace, a place where people can live in peace and prosperity, where there'll be commitment to demilitarization, commitment to democracy and democratic practices, and a commitment to human rights. And to do that, though, we have to focus on the power, the elements there that are opposed to us living in prosperity and peace, and that is the United States of America and its Western allies.

And so the call is to popularize the call for a zone of peace. That is, again, to build popular support for that call. And so, for example, the Black Alliance for Peace launched a couple of years ago a campaign on making the U.S. a zone of peace, reviving and making people aware of the call of 214. And other organizations and movements have picked that up, and there is a really developing, vibrant campaign. We've got to give more support to that. The objective, eject the U.S. from our region. If they're not prepared to live in equality with everybody else, then basically they should not be a member of the civilized nations of this region. Thank you.

[Roger Harris]

We have a question from Bill Mayer. We're referring to possible splits in the Venezuelan military. And I follow the mainstream media pretty closely in Venezuela.

I get a news feed every morning. And this morning, I read through all the various articles that came out of the mainstream media. And what's sort of interesting is that they all get the same memo.

They all have the same theme every morning. Now, this morning's theme was the divisions within Chavismo, that there's factions that are fighting amongst themselves for power in Caracas. And so I'd ask our panelists to comment on why the mainstream media has picked up on that, whether there is validity to that, and the whole question of the disunity there and in the context of the psychological parts of warfare.

[Dan Kovalik]

Well, I would just say, yes, certainly there's divisions within Chavismo. That shouldn't be surprising. You know, it's a big country.

People have different ideas about where the revolution should go. But it doesn't appear to me that there's any division about what's happened with the kidnapping of Nicolás Maduro and his wife. I think there's unanimity that that was wrong.

There seems to be unanimity that the revolution should continue. I think there's unanimity around Delcy Rodríguez as president. And in fact, there was a unanimous vote in the National Assembly to condemn the US intervention in Venezuela.

Even opposition people, even people who opposed Maduro from the right, voted in favor of that resolution. And before the operation against Maduro, a poll in Venezuela taken showed that less than 4% of Venezuelans supported US intervention. So that means darn near every stripe of Chavista opposed it.

Even most of the opposition from the right opposed the intervention. So on the key issues, I think there's unanimity. Meanwhile, things will be debated about how to go forward and all that.

But I don't think that that is a big issue right now for the revolution.

[Ajamu Baraka]

I agree that basically there will always be internal political struggles in any kind of process. And those struggles take place and become even more intense in periods like this. But what we see is that there is unity on the question of surrendering the dignity of Venezuela to some racist gangsters from the United States of America.

These are proud people, sophisticated people who are now prepared to go back in history. And so again, even elements of the right who realize now that the American first agenda of the Trump administration is one in which they will be cut out also. So maybe finally that sort of nationalist bourgeoisie that some elements have been looking for might in fact arise to the occasion.

So there is unity on this sense, there's unity, that there's a commitment to the process. And what needs to be done on the part of people outside of Venezuela, in particular here in the U.S., is for them to keep the focus on demanding that the U.S. take that gun down from the head of this sovereign nation, that they withdraw their troops from the region, that they stop the charade of this so-called trial in the U.S. and return Maduro and his wife back to Venezuela, that they cease and desist from the language of domination here in this region, that they close U.S. bases in this region, that they attempt to try to live like civilized people in equality for once in their existence. So again, the target, the focus must be on these racist gangsters making policies in Washington, D.C. Yep.

[Helena Cobban]

I think it's great, Ajamu, that you focus on the need for the U.S. to take its gun away from the head of, well, from the body of the Venezuelan people and of people around the world, obviously. But it's not just the military gun, it's also the sanctions, which too many people in this country seem to think that, oh, there are sanctions, they must be legitimate. Of course, we know, we who have worked on West Asian issues for decades know that sanctions are a vile weapon.

And actually, *The Lancet* has just recently come out with a study saying that on average, over the last 50 years, U.S. sanctions have killed more than a half a million people every year, which is outrageous if you think about all that human potential just snuffed out. I want to know, is there hope from the BRICS Bank that they can help Venezuela, Colombia, other countries that come under U.S. sanctions attack? When can the BRICS Bank help them?

[Ajamu Baraka]

The BRICS Bank is a process that's still developing. In terms of the amount of capital that they have available versus, for example, the IMF, there's no real comparison. What can be done, though, on this issue of the sanctions is for more and more people to understand that the consequences of these sanctions, that they do result in the loss of life, that they are in fact illegal, and that they are a form of warfare.

And that one cannot be anti-war unless you also are anti-sanctioned. One cannot be anti-violence unless you also are anti-sanctions. So making these kinds of connections will help us in developing the political opposition that we have to, in fact, develop.

Right now, the BRICS nations, there are issues and contradictions even within that process. And we know that there are members, new members of that BRICS process that also find themselves directly in alignment with the U.S. in places like West Asia. So there's no easy solutions to the challenges of this decaying international order.

Whatever is going to develop is going to develop over some time, not too much time. And I really believe that the intensifying contradictions of the global capitalist order is such that we're going to have fundamental changes over the next few years, because it's unsustainable. It's unsustainable as things are today.

So we remain vigilant, hopeful when it comes to the BRICS process, but we got to remind ourselves, folks, BRICS is not Bandung. This is not an anti-imperialist formation. And so there are real limitations there also.

[Roger Harris]

We have a question here from David. Oh, excuse me--

[Dan Kovalik]

Well, yeah, actually, I just, this is, I just, as I see, you know, we're running out of time. I just want to mention on another note that I'm pretty excited because my book, *The Plot to Overthrow Venezuela*, had been out of print. It's now back in print.

So I just wanted to keep people in on that and urge people to get my book. So, because I think it'll be very helpful to this discussion. All right, Roger. Sorry for that shameless self-promotion.

[Roger Harris]

Yeah, that's self-promotion, but I recommend it. I recommend it highly. Thank you. Thank you.

So we have a question here from David Young, and he asks about the accusation that Maduro is legitimate, illegitimate, excuse me.

And I just got a form letter from my senator, Adam Schiff. I wrote to him as a dutiful citizen complaining about the US-Venezuela policy. He just wrote back to me and said, I have been opposing the administration's unlawful use of force against, quote, targets in the region.

He couldn't even bring himself to mention the name Venezuela, targets in the region. But he says, as you know, that he's been a leader in opposing something. And I hope that the panelists will comment on that.

To capture the illegitimate leader of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro. And then he goes on to talk about thuggery in the region. This is presumably someone who's opposed to Trump.

But the thug in the region, according to my Democratic senator, who is the leader of the opposition with the War Powers resolution, says that the thug is Maduro. So I'd like the panelists maybe to comment on that.

[Ajamu Baraka]

You know, this issue is, finally, I mean, it would be really laughable if it wasn't so serious. If Maduro was legitimate or illegitimate, what business is that of the United States of America? What gives the US the right to intervene into the affairs of another nation, especially a US that's in the grip of neofascism?

So we have to nip that kind of stuff in the bud. That basically, you know, the legitimacy of any government will be determined by the people in that nation. And if you understand the complexity of the protracted nature of a revolutionary process, the attempts to overcome historic contradictions, you understand that there's going to be all kinds of developments, all kinds of contradictions, all kinds of errors.

But that ultimately, we have to have the confidence that those things can be worked through by the people themselves. These are very serious people in that country. And again, you know, we could debate and discuss, you know, inside Nicaragua or Venezuela or whatever, that's fine.

But folks, when you find these countries in the crosshairs of US intervention, be mindful that your general conversations that you've been having over dinner or with your friends, whatever, that now, you know, when you take these positions and you start inadvertently giving left cover to US intervention, you are committing not only an error, but you're committing a crime. I'm sorry. Okay?

So this sort of, you know, tendency to want to demonstrate how cute and informed you are, you know, you have to stop because there's a reason why these nations are in the crosshairs of US imperialism. And isn't that because they're anti-Democrat? Isn't that because the US gives a damn about the lives of the people in those countries?

It is because they're probably doing something progressive, doing something that's counter to the interests of the US capitalist class. That's a very simple proposition that we should, that anybody who might define themselves as left should embrace. But you have these super sophisticated leftists, you know, that they know more than the people in the country.

They know more than everybody. And then they objectively find themselves on the same side with imperialism, and then you criticize them, and then they upset. So, you know, time out for all of that.

[Dan Kovalik]

Yeah, I mean, the proof is in the pudding, isn't it? That, as I said, first of all, when you have less than 4% of the country supporting a US intervention, it says the US intervention is against the will of the Venezuelan people. When you have the National Assembly unanimously condemn the kidnapping of Nicolas Maduro and his wife, well, it tells you something.

It tells you that that act by the United States was against the will of the Venezuelan people. The fact that Maduro could be kidnapped, the country put under sanctions for years, all these boats being, you know, blown up in the Caribbean, and yet the government still stands in Caracas to this day. There's been a seamless transition of power with the Chavistas firmly in control.

It's clearly a legitimate government that has popular support. There's just no way to argue against that. And, you know, people say, well, the last election was somehow fraudulent.

First of all, my understanding is that the opposition was told to bring evidence of that to the Supreme Court. They never did, so I don't know that there's any evidence of that. But also, I recall in the United States in 2000 that clearly Bush stole the election from Gore with the connivance of the Supreme Court.

I think that that was illegitimate, but no one in the world thought that another country should come in and kidnap George W. Bush. I mean, that's not how things are done.

Even now, none of us like Donald Trump, but I don't want another country to come in and kidnap Donald Trump. It's up to us to get rid of our own leaders if we don't like them. It's up to the Venezuelans to get rid of their own leaders if they don't like them.

That's how sovereignty works. That's how democracy works. And I think that's the argument.

[Helena Cobban]

That is a really powerful note to end on. Each of you two will have a short opportunity to give final comments, but we are drawing towards the close now. I just remind people that the multimedia records of this webinar and the other two in this series are on our Learning Hub, and I put the link to the Learning Hub into the chat for everybody.

Also, as people leave the webinar, we hope you'll be directed to the online evaluation tool in which you can provide us feedback on today's session, or indeed on the whole series, because it's been a big undertaking that Roger and his colleagues at Task Force on the Americas and we at Just World Educational have invested in this project, so it'd be great to have some evaluation and feedback from all of you. I urge you all to fill this out.

Really want to thank... Oh, I'm so sorry we lost Dan Kovalik just before. He was going to have his closing remarks, but he had told us he has to leave.

[Roger Harris]

Yes, Dan has a webinar right now. Michelle had to run to pick up her daughter, and we're very grateful to both of them for joining us as well.

[Helena Cobban]

But it was great to have both of them, and great to work with you, Roger, as well. So, I'll hand over to Roger so that he can do the final wrap-up.

[Roger Harris]

The final wrap-up, I'm going to hand over to my comrade, Ajamu Baraka, who will do a much better job.

[Ajamu Baraka]

You're left with me, so thank you so much for this very, very important series. I think it was timely, informative. But let us leave this space with not only the information that this series represents, but a new commitment to struggle, to resist.

We, in fact, do have the power to transform ourselves and to transform this world. Let me suggest that because the enemy operates on multiple fronts, we have to do the same. Some are big, some are not that big.

So, for example, in the next couple of days, the Black Alliance for Peace, through its North-South Project for People-Centered Human Rights, we're going to refocus our attention on the demand that the World Cup be pulled by FIFA from the United States of America because of its international criminality, because the U.S. is an unsafe place for fans and teams, because of its support for genocide in Gaza.

We say for the U.S. to host the World Cup and, by extension, the Olympics, it is to normalize international lawlessness, to normalize the genocide. We say we have to oppose that, that we have a petition, we ask people to sign and to disseminate. We're going to have a video we are releasing on Thursday, Dr. King's real birthday. Secondly, we talked about the Zone of Peace where our friends help us with this Zone of Peace campaign. Of course, go to blackallianceforpeace.com and you can support the Zone of Peace committee that's working hard to try to use this moment to raise that demand that we want our region to be a Zone of Peace. So, we leave here with a recommitment to struggle and for everybody who's involved and work that you're involved in to continue.

And we leave here with the knowledge that we know, organized, connected, and coordinated, we definitely can win. Thank you. *Venceremos!*