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## CIA Director Says Venezuela is Risk Because of Cubans, Russians and Iranians



Washington, August 15 (RHC)-- U.S. CIA Director Mike Pompeo defended President Donald Trump not ruling out "a military option" in Venezuela, saying that the South American country could become a risk to the U.S. because "the Cubans are there, the Russians are there, the Iranians, and Hezbollah are there."

During an interview with "Fox News," Pompeo said that Venezuela could become a "very, very bad place," adding that the United States "needs to take this very seriously."

While at his golf course in New Jersey last week, Trump told reporters that the U.S. has a number of solutions to Venezuela's situation and military force was still an option being considered.

According to CIA director, the president's comments were intended to "give the people of Venezuela hope and an opportunity to create a situation in which democracy can be restored."

Trump's national security adviser, Herbert Raymond McMaster, also announced his support while speaking with ABC, saying officials, "don't just want to be able to cooperate in the current situation, but to better understand how this crisis could evolve," adding that the U.S. wants to protect the Venezuelan people from the possibility of a "major humanitarian catastrophe."

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence arrived in Colombia Sunday on a Latin American tour with Venezuela on the top of his agenda. According to Patricio Navia, a political scientist at New York University, Pence is aiming to gain support from Latin American diplomats to remove



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Venezuela's head through other, political means and not necessarily through military force.

The government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has long made calls for peace, dialogue, and negotiated solutions to resolve an ongoing crisis stemming from right-wing opposition protests that have frozen the many of the country's institutions and claimed over 100 lives since April.

Hardliners in the opposition, led by the United Democratic Roundtable have spurned these appeals and have instead opted for violent protests that have led to over 120 deaths in their attempts to overthrow the Bolivarian government.