

After Trump's Invasion Threat: Latin America Rallies Behind Venezuela Against U.S.



Anti-government demonstrators wave a Venezuelan flag during a protest against President Nicolás Maduro in Caracas, Aug. 12, 2017.

CARACAS/LIMA (Dispatches) -- **LATIN AMERICA CAME OUT STRONGLY AGAINST U.S. THREATS OF MILITARY ACTION AGAINST VENEZUELA.**

The sudden escalation of Washington's response to Venezuela's crisis preceded U.S. Vice President Mike Pence's trip to the region beginning Sunday. He is set to visit Colombia, Argentina, Chile, and Panama.

Trump did not specify what type of options he had in mind.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza said the United States would experience 15 times as many difficulties as it suffered in the Vietnam War if it went ahead with the threat.

"Threatening our country, our people, our Latin America, our Caribbean, with a military intervention, is not only unprecedented and unusual, but deeply hostile, disrespectful, condemnable, abject," Arreaza

said.

Venezuela's Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino on Friday disparaged Trump's warning as "craziness" and Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza said on Saturday Venezuela rejected "hostile" threats, calling on Latin America to unite against Washington.

"We want to express gratitude for all the expressions of solidarity and rejection of the use of force from governments around the world, including Latin America," said Arreaza, in a short speech on Saturday.

"Some of these countries have recently taken positions absolutely contrary to our sovereignty and independence but still have rejected the declarations of the U.S. president."

It was one of President Nicolas Maduro's fiercest critics, Peru, that led the charge in criticizing Trump's threat, saying it was against United

Nations principles. Mexico and Colombia joined in with statements of their own.

Regional alliance Mercosur added that it rejected the use of force against Venezuela, despite having indefinitely suspended the country last week after Venezuelans voted for a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution.

Peru expelled Venezuela's ambassador in Lima on Friday, but that did not stop it from criticizing Trump's threat.

"All foreign or domestic threats to resort to force undermine the goal of reinstating democratic governance in Venezuela, as well as the principles enshrined in the UN charter," said Peru's Foreign Minister Ricardo Luna.

More than 120 people have died in unrest and anti-government protests since April.

Venezuela's Information Minister Vladimir Villegas on Saturday tweeted a picture of the Statue of Liberty holding a machine gun instead of a torch, and a link to an article describing, "A Chronology of U.S. 'Military Options' in Latam and the Caribbean."

At Least 11 Killed in Kenya Post-Election Violence



A supporter of the opposition leader Raila Odinga faces off against police officers during a protest in the Kibera area of Nairobi, Aug. 12, 2017.

NAIROBI (AFP) -- **TENSIONS REMAINED HIGH IN KENYA ON SUNDAY AFTER 11 PEOPLE DIED IN VIOLENT PROTESTS AND THE OPPOSITION LED BY ITS DEMAND THAT THE RE-ELECTION OF PRESIDENT UHURU KENYATTA BE OVERTURNED.**

While most of the country was calm, stone-throwing supporters of defeated veteran rival Raila Odinga squared off on Saturday with security forces in opposition strongholds in the country's west and the slums of the

capital Nairobi.

A senior police official told AFP on condition of anonymity that eight bodies from Nairobi's slums had arrived at the city morgue, and an AFP photographer saw the body of a young girl whose family said she had been shot in the back while watching the protests from a balcony.

In western Kenya, a police officer said a man had been killed during a protest in the town of Siaya and local government official Wilson Njega confirmed one person had been shot dead in protests at Kisumu.

It remains unclear what the next move will be for Odinga's National Super Alliance (NASA) opposition coalition, but party leaders have said they will neither back down nor take their grievances to court.

"We will not be cowed, we will not relent," NASA official Johnson Muthama told reporters on Saturday.

He and other opposition stalwarts insist that elections held on Tuesday were manipulated. They also accuse the police of cracking down on protesters in an effort to force the coalition "into submission."

Kenya is no stranger to post-election violence, and scars still run deep from a disputed 2007 vote which led to two months of ethnic-political clashes, leaving 1,100 dead and 600,000 displaced.

But while those riots stretched across Kenya, this year's unrest is limited to a handful of areas.

Interior Minister Fred Matiangi downplayed the clashes, calling protesters "criminal elements" and saying there had been no casualties.

"The police have not used live bullets on any peaceful protesters," he said.

Odinga, 72, has not yet addressed his supporters after losing his fourth shot at the presidency. He believes elections in 2007, 2013 and now 2017 were snatched away from him.

He laid out accusations of a massive hacking attack on election commission servers, and said the opposition had evidence the true results -- which showed him to be the winner -- were being hidden.

Five Killed in Fierce Gunbattle in Indian Kashmir



Indian Army soldiers are seen during a gunbattle with Kashmiri rebels in Pampore, near Srinagar, in February 2016.

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — Three Kashmiri rebels and two Indian soldiers have been killed in a fierce gunbattle in the disputed Himalayan region, police said Sunday.

The fighting erupted Saturday after Indian troops raided southern Awneera village on a tip that at least seven rebels fighting New Delhi's rule were hiding there, said top police officer S.P. Vaid.

He said militants lobbed hand grenades and fired automatic rifles from two civilian homes and an apple orchard, killing two soldiers. At least three other soldiers were wounded.

Police said the firing stopped late in the night but resumed early Sunday, when three rebels were killed. Vaid said they were affiliated with the Hizbul Mujahideen, the largest Kashmiri insurgent group.

Residents said a civilian home was destroyed after troops blasted it with explosives.

Anti-India protests followed the fighting Saturday and Sunday, leading to clashes between rock-throwing residents and government forces who fired shotgun pellets and tear gas.

At least seven protesters were reported injured in the clashes.

Separately, two police officials and a soldier were injured after rebels sprayed gunfire at government forces laying a cordon in northeastern Hajin area early Sunday.

Also Sunday, a civilian who was wounded in a petrol bomb attack in the region's main city of Srinagar died in a hospital. Police said unknown perpetrators hurled the bomb at a police party on Saturday but missed the target, hitting the passer-by.

In recent years, Kashmiris, mainly youths, have displayed open solidarity with anti-India rebels and sought to protect them by engaging troops in street clashes during military operations against the militants. The anti-India protests and clashes have persisted despite the Indian army chief warning recently that "tough action" would be taken against

stone throwers during counterinsurgency operations.

Nuclear-armed rebels India and Pakistan each administer part of Kashmir, but both claim the Himalayan territory in its entirety. Rebel groups demand that Kashmir be united either under Pakistani rule or as an independent country.

Anti-India sentiment runs deep in Kashmir's mostly Muslim population and most people support the rebels' cause against Indian rule. Nearly 70,000 people have been killed in the uprising and the ensuing Indian military crackdown.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the rebels, which Pakistan denies.

David Miliband Calls For Second Referendum on Brexit

LONDON (Dispatches) -- **DAVID MILIBAND HAS ISSUED A CALL FOR POLITICIANS ON ALL SIDES TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE "WORST CONSEQUENCES" OF LAST YEAR'S VOTE FOR BRITAIN TO LEAVE THE EU.**

The former Labor Foreign Secretary described the outcome of the 2016 referendum as an "unparalleled act of economic self-harm."

Writing in The Observer, he said the country should have the chance to vote on any Brexit deal in a second referendum, with a straight choice between remaining in the EU and the negotiated alternative.

"People say we must respect the referendum. We should. But democracy did not end on 23 June, 2016. The referendum will be no excuse if the country is driven off a cliff," he wrote.

"MPs are there to exercise judgment. Delegating to Theresa May and David

Davis, never mind Boris Johnson and Liam Fox, the settlement of a workable alternative to EU membership is a delusion, not just an abdication."

His intervention came as Chancellor Philip Hammond and International Trade Secretary Liam Fox came together to declare that a post-Brexit transition would not be a "back door" to Britain remaining in the EU.

After a summer of cabinet feuding, Hammond, who favors a "softer" pro-business Brexit, and Fox, a hardline Brexiteer, said that they agreed there should not be "cliff-edge" break when Britain leaves the EU in March 2019.

In a joint article for The Sunday Telegraph, they said any transition would be "time limited" and that Brexit would mean the UK pulling out of both the EU single market and the customs union.



KATHMANDU/NEW DELHI (Dispatches) -- **TORRENTIAL RAIN BATTERED NEPAL ON SUNDAY, CAUSING WIDESPREAD FLOODING AND LANDSLIDES AND RAISING THE DEATH TOLL FROM THREE DAYS OF SEVERE WEATHER TO 49 PEOPLE, ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS.**

The toll could go higher as three dozen people were reported missing. Another 17 were injured. The heavy rain, which mainly hit the country's southern plains, led to the evacuation of 5,000 people, a Home Ministry official said.

Meanwhile, at least six people have been killed and dozens more are missing after a massive landslide swept two buses off a hillside into a deep gorge in mountainous northern India, an official said Sunday.

The coaches had stopped for a tea break around midnight Saturday in Himachal Pradesh when tonnes of rock and mud swept away an entire stretch of highway roughly 200 kilometers (124 miles) from the state capital Shimla.

The Press Trust of India reported 30 people were feared dead in the disaster, while other reports suggested an even higher toll.

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- **A NEW STUDY PUBLISHED IN JAMA PSYCHIATRY THIS MONTH FINDS THAT THE RATE OF ALCOHOL USE DISORDER, OR WHAT'S COLLOQUIALLY KNOWN AS "ALCOHOLISM," ROSE BY A SHOCKING 49% IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THE 2000s. ONE IN EIGHT AMERICAN ADULTS, OR 12.7% OF THE U.S. POPULATION, NOW MEETS DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR ALCOHOL USE DISORDER, ACCORDING TO THE STUDY.**

The study's authors characterize the findings as a serious and overlooked public health crisis, noting that alcoholism is a significant driver of mortality from a cornucopia of ailments: "fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, liver cirrhosis, several types of cancer and infections, pancreatitis, type 2 diabetes, and various injuries."

TAIPEI (Reuters) -- **CHINESE MILITARY AIRCRAFT CARRIED OUT TWO ROUNDS OF DRILLS AROUND TAIWAN AT THE WEEKEND, FLYING PAST ITS SOUTHERN TIP AND THEN AROUND ITS NORTH NEAR JAPAN, THE SELF-RULED ISLAND'S DEFENSE MINISTRY SAID.**

China has been increasingly asserting itself in territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas. It is also worried about Taiwan, which it claims as its own, but which is run by a government China fears is intent on independence.

On Sunday, two Chinese military transport aircraft flew through the Bashi Channel between Taiwan and the Philippines before going up near the Japanese island of Miyako, to Taiwan's north, where they were joined by two Chinese fighter jets, and then returned home, the ministry said.

NAIROBI (Reuters) -- **SOUTH SUDAN'S REBELS SAID THEY HAD WRESTED CONTROL OF PAGAK, THEIR STRONGHOLD TOWN NEAR THE COUNTRY'S BORDER WITH ETHIOPIA, FROM GOVERNMENT FORCES, A DAY AFTER LAUNCHING AN OFFENSIVE TO DRIVE THEM OUT.**

Formerly controlled by the rebels, the town was captured by South Sudan's military five days ago but rebels fighting erupted on Friday with rebels vowing to retake it. Dickson Gatluak Jock, spokesman for South Sudan's Vice President, Taban Deng Gai, denied the military had lost Pagak but said they had lost three soldiers in the fighting while four were wounded.

South Sudan descended into civil war in 2013, only two years after it won independence, when President Salva Kiir fired his deputy, Riek Machar, unleashing a conflict that has since splintered along multiple ethnic lines.

MOGADISHU (Dispatches) -- **A FORMER SOMALI INSURGENT LEADER, MUKHTAR ROBOW ABU MANSUR, HAS DEJECTED TO THE GOVERNMENT, A MILITARY OFFICIAL SAID ON SUNDAY, SEVERING TIES WITH TAKFIRI GROUP AL-SHABAAB.**

Al-Shabaab fell out with its former spokesman and deputy leader Robow in 2013 and he has been laying low in the jungles with his forces since then. The Takfiris have launched multiple attacks to try kill or capture him.

"Robow and his seven bodyguards are now in Hudur with local officials. He will be flown to Mogadishu soon," Colonel Nur Mohamed, a Somali military officer, told Reuters by phone from the southwestern town of Hudur.

BERLIN (AP) -- **ANGELA MERKEL'S MAIN CHALLENGER IN THE COUNTRY'S UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTION SAYS HE REMAINS CONFIDENT HE CAN UNSEAT THE CHANCELLOR DESPITE HER WIDE LEAD IN THE POLLS.**

Martin Schulz, who was president of the European Parliament until January, said on Germany's ZDF television Sunday there are still six weeks of campaigning to go before the Sept. 24 vote.

He says "I think that I still have a good chance to lead the next government." The latest poll, by the Emnid agency for Bild newspaper on Sunday, shows Schulz's Social Democrats gaining a percentage point to 24% support, compared to a steady 38% support for Merkel's conservative bloc. The margin of error was plus or minus 2.5%.

Military Buildup in Rakhine Raises Fresh Alarms

YANGON (Dispatches) -- **MYANMAR HAS MOVED HUNDREDS OF TROOPS INTO NORTHERN RAKHINE STATE AFTER THE UN VOICED ALARM OVER REPORTS OF A MILITARY BUILDUP IN THE REGION WHERE ROHINGYA MUSLIMS HAVE BEEN THE TARGET FOR RACIST ATTACKS.**

Rakhine has been gripped by violence since October last year amid a bloody military crackdown that the UN believes may amount to ethnic cleansing of the Muslim minority.

More than 70,000 Rohingya villagers fled across the border to Bangladesh, carrying with them stories of systematic rape, murder and arson at the hands of soldiers.

The major part of the military campaign

AFP, requesting anonymity.

State media also reported that the government had imposed new curfews. A Rohingya villager told AFP his community feared a repeat of last year's crackdown.

"Some Muslim villages in Rathidaung dare not to go outside," said Hasumyar, who only gave his first name and lives in a township that has been placed under curfew.

Reports of an army battalion being flown into Rakhine to boost security were met with criticism on Friday by UN special rapporteur Yanghee Lee, who warned the development was "a cause for major concern."

The UN has accused the military of



The Myanmar government has confirmed that it is imposing new curfews and deploying another round of troops to Rakhine state.

ended several months ago, but fear continues to stalk the region amid sporadic bouts of violence.

Officers said Saturday that the government had deployed a fresh batch of troops after a recent spate of murders. They said soldiers have been sent to a mountainous area where a band of militants is actively training.

"Many battalions with hundreds of soldiers from central Myanmar were deployed to the Mayu mountain range," a military officer told

committing grave abuses against the Rohingya during its counterinsurgency campaign.

Buddhist-majority Myanmar has long faced criticism for its treatment of the more than one million Rohingya, who are denied citizenship and struggle to access basic services.

The minority group is widely reviled as illegal migrants from Bangladesh, despite having lived in the area for generations.