

January 8, 2026

**Open Letter to Prime Minister Mark Carney:
Canada must take urgent action with international partners to oppose U.S. threats
to rights, sovereignty and peace in Venezuela and the Americas**

Dear Prime Minister,

It is with the utmost urgency that we share our alarm about **the unlawful, lethal, U.S. military attack in Venezuela on January 3 and the abduction of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and First Lady Cilia Flores**. As coalitions representing 26 Canadian civil society organizations with decades of dedicated work for rights and justice with partner organizations in the Americas, we know only too well the devastating consequences of U.S. military intervention.

In this context, silence is not an option. **We join our many partners across Latin America, the Caribbean and beyond who are vigorously condemning the U.S. military operation of January 3, President Trump's stated intention to 'run Venezuela' and sell seized Venezuelan oil, his recorded threats to send U.S. troops into Colombia and Mexico, and threats against Cuba.**

UN experts have said that the U.S. military operation of January 3 and President Trump's threats of more military intervention in Venezuela and beyond are flagrant violations of the UN Charter that set a hugely dangerous precedent. As the President of the UN General Assembly, Annalena Baerbock, stated on January 3: *"The UN Charter is not optional—it is our guiding framework... Article 2 of the UN Charter clearly stipulates that all Members of the United Nations shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Respect of the UN Charter and international law is the foundation of the international order. A peaceful, safe and just world for everyone is only possible if the rule of law prevails instead of might makes right."*

The stakes are high, especially in our hemisphere. We can be under no illusion that any country, including Canada, is safe if violations of international law and the UN Charter are allowed to be committed with impunity. Access to the oil reserves of Venezuela and the natural resources of other countries are clearly the goal of the Trump administration, notwithstanding the false narratives they continue to share in an attempt to justify illegal, violent action and threats of annexation.

On January 4, Canada's economic and regional partners Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay, together with Spain, affirmed "the status of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, built on mutual respect, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention." They called for "regional unity beyond political differences in the face of any action that jeopardizes regional stability" and

expressed “concern regarding any attempt at governmental control, administration or external appropriation of natural or strategic resources which would be incompatible with international law.”

Canada must take strong, clear and immediate action.

1. We urge Canada to defend the UN Charter by unequivocally condemning the U.S. military intervention in Venezuela, the abduction of Venezuela’s President and First Lady, the presumption of U.S. control over Venezuelan resources and other egregious violations of sovereignty and international law that threaten rights and security in the region.
2. We reiterate with heightened urgency, the calls in our letter to Ministers Anand, McGuinty and Sidhu of November 13, 2025 for Canada to: immediately suspend intelligence sharing with the U.S. via Operation CARIBBE and close the loophole that currently allows for the export of military goods to the U.S. despite the clear risk that they could be used in military operations that violate international law and human rights. We are dismayed that two months later, we have received no reply to our letter from your ministers, despite the gravity of the violations and their implications for peace in the region.
3. We call on Canada to urgently articulate a robust, independent, rights-based policy that responds to the [November 2025 National Security Strategy](#) of the Trump administration, which promises to “reassert and enforce the Monroe Doctrine to restore American [sic] pre-eminence in the Western Hemisphere.” Our organizations have witnessed and stood in solidarity with peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean as previous U.S. administrations repeatedly used the Monroe Doctrine to justify invasions, interventions and CIA-led regime changes in the Americas. Canadian foreign policy must:
 - Be centred on the primacy of defending the full spectrum of human rights, as obligated by the international treaties and covenants Canada has signed;
 - Affirm peace, life with dignity, and justice as non-negotiable values;
 - Uphold the right of nations to their territorial integrity and sovereignty;
 - Uphold the right of peoples to self-determination and a life free from the fear of invasion.

The Americas Policy Group (APG) is a national network of Canadian civil society organizations working for human rights and social and environmental justice in Latin America and the Caribbean. It brings together international development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights organizations, labour unions, faith-based and solidarity groups, and research institutions.

Common Frontiers is a national coalition composed of labour, environmental, faith based and social justice organizations focused on the Americas. We amplify the struggles of organizations and communities with which our members hold long-term relationships throughout the region, and who work to defend democracy, human rights, labour rights, strong public services and the environment.