

News Article ⓘ

Trump Weighing Military Options to Attack Venezuela Within Days—Report

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President Donald Trump on Wednesday received updated military options for potential operations in Venezuela, including possible land strikes, according to CBS News. Senior defense leaders, including Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Joint Chiefs Chairman Dan Caine, briefed the president on scenarios for the coming days.

The U.S. intelligence community helped provide information for the potential operations, CBS News reported. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard did not attend the White House discussions because she was returning from an overseas trip, while Secretary of State Marco Rubio was in Canada for a G7 meeting of foreign ministers.

No final decision has been made, CBS News reported. *Newsweek* has reached out to the White House and the Pentagon via email on Thursday afternoon for comment.

The briefing came as the USS Gerald Ford carrier strike group entered the region and U.S. forces intensified recent strikes on vessels accused of drug smuggling.



President Donald Trump, right, and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth attend an NFL football game between the Washington Commanders and the Detroit Lions. [Read More](#)

The arrival of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* in [Caribbean](#) waters has started what one defense expert calls a strategic “shot clock,” forcing the Trump administration to decide whether to act militarily against [Venezuela](#) or retreat—each with profound geopolitical consequences.

The *Ford* strike group, including three guided-missile destroyers, entered the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility on Tuesday, expanding the U.S. military footprint to roughly 15,000 troops across a dozen warships in the region. The deployment, officially part of a counter-narcotics campaign, comes amid intensifying speculation that the White House may consider direct strikes against Venezuelan targets.

“There’s no strategic rationale for sending the *Ford* to the region unless it’s intended for use against Venezuela,” said Mark Cancian, senior defense adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in an interview with *Newsweek*.

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“The shot clock is now running—this carrier can’t just sit idle. They’ll either need to act or redeploy it, and pulling back would amount to backing off.”

seen as a strategic climbdown and a sign to Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro that President Trump is bluffing.

“The *Ford* is too powerful a capability to just sit in the Caribbean and do nothing,” Cancian said. “They’ll probably run some exercises, but it won’t be able to sit there week after week.”

The aircraft carrier group was ordered into the region on October 24 by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who relocated it from the Mediterranean. According to the Pentagon, its mission is to “detect, monitor, and disrupt illicit actors” operating drug-trafficking routes that span from the Pacific to the Caribbean. But the scale of the deployment and its proximity to Venezuela have signaled a broader intent.

Updates: 11/13/25, 12:36 p.m. ET: This article was updated with new information and remarks.

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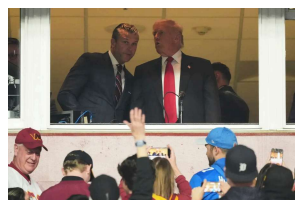
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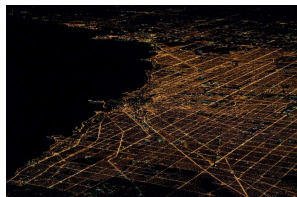
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