



MEDEL statement on US military action in Venezuela

The armed attack by the United States in Venezuela, including the apprehension and transfer to the US of its president and his wife, represents a clear violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter, which require all members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.

Neither the accountability for the Venezuelan government's appalling human rights record, nor that for its widely denounced lack of democratic legitimacy, can be enforced out of the perimeter of available legal tools and of the mechanisms that respect the Venezuelan people's right to self-determination.

The US military action marks a further step towards a paradigm shift in the world order, which seeks to replace international law and institutions with the power of the strongest.

Any prospect of lasting peace and democracy requires that the principles of international law be constantly reaffirmed and that the institutions responsible for their implementation be safeguarded from any action or practice that threatens their credibility and effectiveness.

Europe and the international community cannot, therefore, remain reluctant or ambiguous in condemning the unilateral use of force - outside the cases strictly permitted by the UN Charter - as illegal, and in calling on all Member States to remain faithful to the Charter's provisions and not to legitimize in any way situations arising from their violation.

While reiterating its utmost concern about the ongoing attack on a rules-based international order, MEDEL joins its voice to that of the legal community and civil society in urging international and European institutions and Member States to:

- clearly condemn any act involving the illegal use of force and any action that, instead of addressing situations of serious breach of fundamental rights with the instruments of international law aimed at ending them and providing redress, exploits instead such contexts in order to violate the obligations and limitations imposed by international law;
- ensure full respect for international law, including human rights, and the accountability for their violation;
- take all necessary measures to ensure compliance with the fundamental rules governing the peaceful coexistence of States and respect for free and democratic transition processes.

7 January 2026