



## **RUSSIA'S ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA**

**March 2021**

The following is a summary of open-source media reporting on Russia's presence and activities in Latin America and the Caribbean in March 2021. This is not a complete list of media reports on Russia's activities in Latin America but are some of the most relevant articles and reports selected by SFS researchers and fellows. The monitor does source a limited amount of media reports from state-owned or -controlled media outlets, which are carefully selected and solely intended to report on news that is not reported on by other media and is relevant for understanding VRIC influence in the region. This report is produced as part of our VRIC Monitor published monthly by the Center for a Secure Free Society (SFS), a non-profit, national security think tank based in Washington D.C.

# **RUSSIA**

- The COVID-19 pandemic allowed different airlines to arrive for the first time in many places. In the case of Latin American airlines, such as Avianca, Aeroméxico, LATAM Airlines and Aerolíneas Argentinas, they landed for the first time in China, in search of medical supplies to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, and in order to continue fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic, Latin American airlines have begun to fly to Russia, to transport the Sputnik V vaccine. The first Latin American airline to arrive in Russia has been Aerolíneas Argentinas, which already has 6 special flights to the European-Asian country. - [Airline Geeks on 13-MAR](#)
- Reflective control is a disinformation strategy developed in Russia, in which "information specifically prepared to encourage them to voluntarily make a desired

decision by the initiator of action is transmitted to opponents." For decades, Cuba and Venezuela have successfully used reflective control to distract, overload, paralyze, exhaust, deceive, divide, pacify, deter, provoke, suggest, and pressure their respective oppositions. - [Republica on 11-MAR \(content in Spanish\)](#)

- State media reports Argentina decided to extradite to Russia a citizen of Colombia accused of stealing valuables worth 160 million rubles (\$2.1 million), Andrey Ivanov, a spokesman for Russia's Prosecutor General's Office, told reporters. "At the request of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation, the competent authorities of the Argentine Republic extradited to Russia a citizen of the Republic of Colombia, Edgar Alejandro Valero Valero," Ivanov said. - [Urdu Point on 09-MAR](#)
- The diffuse connection between Colombia and Russia in drug trafficking: The authorities are trying to clarify what links the mafias in these countries have agreed to, despite the fact that in recent years some episodes show that there are important contacts, but that they would not be as solid as those that were in the 1990s with Pablo Escobar and the Rodríguez Orejuela family. - [El Espectador on 08-MAR \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Recent images allow us to see a new dimension of Russian-Venezuelan military cooperation. Matching equipment with Russian FFEE equipment are seen in an FANB anti-terrorism training video - [Andrei Serbin Pont via Twitter on 04-MAR \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- With Sputnik V, Vladimir Putin's Russia tries to improve its image and increase its influence in strategic regions The Russian Fund for Direct Investment, which finances and markets it abroad, has said in the past that it received requests from 50 countries for 2.4 billion doses. The question is whether he will be able to comply. They expect the delivery of millions more doses to countries in Latin America, Africa, the former Soviet Union and the Middle East, as part of a campaign of Russian diplomacy based on vaccines. - [Clarín on 07-MAR \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- State media reports with the aim of continuing to strengthen the ties of friendship, solidarity and bilateral cooperation between the Russian Federation and Venezuela, the first vice president of the PSUV, Diosdado Cabello Rondón, held a working meeting with the ambassador of that nation, Sergey Melik-Bagdasarov. They also talked about the different agreements between the two countries, including the fight against Covid-19, regarding the arrival of the first 100,000 doses of the Sputnik-V vaccine. - [Diario Vea on 23-FEB](#)
- Russia deploys its vaccine and increases its influence among its Latin American allies. Maduro pays \$12 per dose with barrels of oil despite U.S. sanctions. - [La Razón on 23-FEB](#)
- Russia has again approached the Argentine government to offer defense equipment, including military planes for the air force. The information was released by the InfoDefensa website, which cited a recent meeting between the Russian ambassador to

Argentina, Dmitry V. Feoktistov, and the commander of the Argentine Air Force (FAA), Major-Brigadier Xavier Isaac. According to a statement by the Russian embassy, the meeting addressed “prospects for bilateral technical-military cooperation between the two nations.” - [MercoPress on 04-FEB](#)