



IRAN'S ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

September 2021

The following is a summary of open-source media reporting on Iran's presence and activities in Latin America and the Caribbean in September 2021. This is not a complete list of media reports on Iran'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.



- State media reports Iran's Ambassador to Brasilia Hossein Qaribi and Chairwoman of Brazil's Senate Foreign Relations and Defense Committee (CRE) Katia Abreu held talks on ways to promote trade exchanges. - [IRNA on 16-SEP](#)
- Israeli media reported that the country's security apparatus last June thwarted an Iranian terrorist operation to assassinate two Israeli nationals in Colombia. - [Iran Briefing on 08-SEP](#)
- The Presidency of the Council of Ministers confirmed that its head, Guido Bellido, met with the Yemeni citizen Abdullah Qasem. Through a statement it was specified that he has not been hired as a consultant for not meeting the necessary profile, despite the fact that he offered his professional services. - [Perú 21 on 06-SEP \(content in Spanish\)](#)

- Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Rayeesi in a telephone conversation with his Nicaraguan counterpart Daniel Ortega underlined that his government's diplomacy is to further improve bilateral relations with Latin American countries, especially Nicaragua. - [Fars News on 01-SEP](#)
- State media reports in a phone call between Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Daniel Ortega, the President of Nicaragua, both sides discussed improving relations as well as approaches towards the US - [Tehran Times on 01-SEP](#)
- State media reports the head of Iran Mine House said that Iran and Brazil have great capacities to expand cooperation in the mining field, especially in investment and equipment. - [IRNA on 01-SEP](#)
- The Governor of the Bolivarian state of Aragua, G / D Rodolfo Marco Torres, participated in the extraordinary Congress of the Federation of Arab Entities and Associations (FEARAB), which was held this Sunday at the Syrian Venezuelan Social and Cultural Center Maracay. - [Ciudad MCY on 31-AUG](#)
- Iran's new government includes two men who have been implicated in the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish center in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people. - [The Jerusalem Post on 28-AUG](#)
- Syrian citizen Samer Al Hasanieh, who was in Colombia with a Venezuelan identity card, was expelled for 10 years for entering the country irregularly and for allegedly carrying out activities "that would affect order, tranquility and citizen security," according to Colombia Migration. - [El Tiempo on 27-AUG \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- The presence of the Yemeni citizen Ahmed Abdullah Qasem Abduljalil in the office of Prime Minister Guido Bellido Ugarte has aroused the concern of the diplomatic community accredited in the country. According to the record of visits from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Abdullah Qasem has held eleven "working meetings" with Bellido, which began shortly after taking office. The Republic repeatedly requested information from the PCM on the relationship between Bellido and the Yemeni, but received no response. - [La República on 25-AUG \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- An Iranian IRGC linked Fars Qeshm airbus has flown between Venezuela and Iran twice in a week. - [Conflicts News Worldwide on 18-AUG via Twitter](#)
- The Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Felix Plasencia, met with the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran accredited in Caracas, Hojatollah Soltani, with the intention of advancing a common agenda that contributes to the strengthening of bilateral cooperation. - [Today in 24 on 04-AUG](#)
- State media reports Ayatollah Raisi was in a meeting with the Secretary General of the ALBA Sacha Llorenti and stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the member states of the ALBA have common values. - [Iran Government via Twitter on 04-AUG](#)

- The Foreign Minister of Bolivia, Rogelio Mayta, visited the new president of Iran, Seyed Ebrahim Rais, to increase ties between the two countries. The Iranian ruler claimed that the current level of bilateral relationship is "insufficient." - [Agencia Fides \(ANF\) via Twitter on 04-AUG](#)

HEZBOLLAH

- Iran has expanded its influence in Latin America with a double threat: extremist ideology and alliance with criminal groups. According to analysts, Tehran conducts illicit business with Venezuela, supports the expansion of the terrorist group Hezbollah into the region, and benefits from illegal mining. - [Diálogo Americas on 14-SEP](#)
- The Iranian regime's use of Iranian and Lebanese clerics as "unofficial" agents in Latin America is becoming increasingly well-known. A few documented individuals, strategically distributed and cloaked by benign official activities such as service in mosques and setting up cultural centers, have served a dual purpose of recruiting regime sympathizers to serve its foreign policy objectives. - [Iran Wire on 10-SEP](#)
- As Paraguayan anti-drug authorities announced the arrest of a man operating in a largely lawless border area, the U.S. Treasury Department placed sanctions on him, two associates and five companies connected to them. Kassem Mohamad Hijazi, a Brazilian citizen of Lebanese descent, was detained August 24 in Ciudad del Este as he faces charges of money laundering and drug trafficking, Paraguayan authorities said. He was transferred to the capital, Asuncion, where he will await extradition to the US, according to media reports. - [Kharon on 02-SEP](#)

THE NISMAN/AMIA CASE

- Antonio "Jaime" Stiuso, the strong man of Argentine intelligence from 1980 to December 2014, reappeared and appeared this morning to cast his vote for the Open, Simultaneous and Mandatory Primary in a school in the Buenos Aires neighborhood of Recoleta. - [Infobae on 12-SEP \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- The Supreme Court of Justice ended the discussion on who should analyze the telephones and electronic equipment seized from Diego Lagomarsino, prosecuted as a necessary participant in the cause for the death of prosecutor Alberto Nisman. According to judicial sources indicated to Infobae, unanimously, the highest court rejected a complaint from the defense of the computer expert who challenged that it was the prosecutor Eduardo Taiano, instead of the judge Julián Ercolini, who analyzed and selected the evidence of what will be found in those kidnapped items. - [Infobae on 09-SEP \(content in Spanish\)](#)

TURKEY

- During an official visit to Turkey, Uruguay's foreign minister Francisco Bustillo has announced plans to strengthen economic ties between the two countries. Bustillo said that

the two governments had agreed to accelerate the signing of bilateral agreements already under negotiation which include the promotion and protection of investments and on the avoidance of double taxation. - [LatinNews Daily on 25-AUG](#)

ALEX SAAB

- Venezuela National Assembly President Jorge Rodríguez said that the government would incorporate Alex Saab, currently jailed in Cabo Verde, as a member of its delegation at the dialogue process taking place in Mexico. - [Reuters on 14-SEP](#)
- A court in Cape Verde ruled that Colombian businessman Alex Saab, close to Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro arrested last year in the West African country, can be extradited to the United States to face money-laundering charges. - [Associated Press on 07-SEP](#)
- State media reports the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry condemned the situation facing the Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab, who has been arbitrarily detained in Cape Verde because of an extradition request to the United States. - [TeleSUR on 12-AUG](#)