



BOLIVARIAN THREAT NETWORK

August 2021

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



- Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza, confirmed that he held “a cordial meeting” with Argentine Foreign Minister Felipe Solá “to strengthen brotherhood relations and future cooperation.” - [Infobae on 24-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Venezuela's state-run PDVSA began discharging 620,000 barrels of imported condensate crude oil at the nation's largest oil port this week in an effort to boost blending operations, according to two company documents, sources and vessel tracking data. - [Reuters on 22-JUL](#)

- The question of who controls more than \$1 billion of Venezuelan gold stored in the Bank of England's vaults took another twist after the British government said that it continues to recognize the leadership of opposition figure Juan Guaido. - [Bloomberg on 19-JUL](#)
- Venezuelan business chamber Fedecamaras received Vice President Delcy Rodriguez for the opening of its annual assembly, a sign of easing tensions between business leaders and the socialist government following decades of bitter rivalry. - [News 18 on 21-JUL](#)
- Venezuelan opposition activist and former mayor Emilio Grateron has taken refuge in the Chilean diplomatic residence in Caracas, Chilean and Venezuelan authorities said, amid a wave of arrests of political adversaries of Maduro. - [Reuters on 17-JUL](#)
- The Cyprus maritime and business sector is being used by shipowners in the European Union to register and flag tankers involved in Venezuelan oil trades with tacit acceptance from the republic's shipping ministry. At least 11 elderly tankers involved in Venezuelan trades have moved to the Cyprus flag over the past 12 months and ownership shifted to a series of newly incorporated single-ship companies in Limassol. - [Lloyd's List on 14-JUL](#)
- Maduro said that Mexico will host talks between his government and the opposition, but insisted he will only take part if international sanctions are lifted and he is protected from any plots to oust him. - [Digital Journal on 13-JUL](#)
- The United States and the United Kingdom condemned the detention of Venezuelan opposition politician Freddy Guevara. - [Reuters on 13-JUL](#)
- The US government authorized shipments to Venezuela of liquefied petroleum gas, mainly used in the OPEC nation as cooking fuel and currently in short supply, causing people to burn large amounts of wood. - [Reuters on 12-JUL](#)
- Venezuelan prosecutors said they had charged opposition politician Freddy Guevara with terrorism and treason, among other allegations, after the country's intelligence service arrested him from his car on a Caracas highway. - [Reuters on 12-JUL](#)
- Swathes of Venezuela's capital are paralyzed by intense fighting between urban gangs and security forces while terrified families cower in their homes as the nation's slide toward anarchy accelerates. - [Bloomberg on 09-JUL](#)
- Venezuela's state-run oil company PDVSA has started producing two upgraded crude grades for domestic refining, aiming at reanimating the country's much-needed output of motor fuels, according to a company document and sources close to the decision. - [Reuters on 08-JUL](#)
- On July 5, the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague announced that it had rejected an appeal by Maduro that had sought to prevent an ICC investigation into human rights violations in Venezuela. - [Latin News Daily on 06-JUL](#)

- U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet welcomes efforts by Maduro to improve human rights standards in the country but says they do not go far enough. Bachelet gave her assessment in a report she submitted to the U.N. Human Rights Council. The Maduro regime has announced several new initiatives, including reforms of the country's police and justice system. - [Voice of America on 06-JUL](#)
- Venezuelan security forces carried out fewer extra-judicial killings in the 12 months through April, a U.N. report said, but it accuses them of a continued pattern of torture or cruel treatment of individuals as well as enforced disappearances and incommunicado detentions. - [Washington Post on 05-JUL](#)
- Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaido demanded the release of a human rights activist and two others who were detained on charges of treason for reporting on the armed conflict along the border with Colombia. A Venezuelan court charged Fundaredes leader Javier Tarazona and two other activists for treason, saying their actions incited hatred and terrorism, according to their lawyer Clara Ramirez. - [BNN Bloomberg on 03-JUL](#)
- Venezuelan rights group Fundaredes said authorities had arrested its director and two other activists who have lifted the lid on fighting near the border with Colombia. Fundaredes had reported on the presence of Colombian dissident guerrillas on Venezuelan territory and criticized the response of the government, which it accused of harboring the fighters. - [Voice of America on 03-JUL](#)
- On June 24, heads of state and of government also met in Caracas for the Summit of ALBA-TCP, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty. Headed by Maduro, the regional encounter included Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, Bolivian President Luis Arce, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega speaking via livestream, and some Caribbean nations. Former presidents Rafael Correa of Ecuador, Evo Morales of Bolivia and former Colombian Senator Piedad Córdoba attended as observers. - [Liberation News on 02-JUL](#)
- Venezuela is preparing to once again lop off zeroes from the national currency in an attempt to simplify daily transactions which sometimes barely fit on a calculator or require swiping cards multiple times to complete a purchase. - [BNN Bloomberg on 01-JUL](#)
- In the second half of the year, Venezuela's state-owned PDVSA will restart the drilling of oil wells while intensifying work to open 3,700 shuttered wells and to recover compression and gas injection capacity needed to increase crude output. - [S&P Global Platts on 29-JUN](#)
- Venezuela will allow a coalition of major opposition political parties to field candidates in upcoming elections, the head of the electoral council said, as the opposition and government prepare to enter into a negotiation process. - [Reuters on 29-JUN](#)

- An armored truck company CEO has been embroiled in a money-laundering case extending from Latin America to South Florida after he allegedly facilitated the importation of thousands of kilograms of illegally sourced gold from Venezuela. The suspect, Jesus Gabriel Rodriguez Jr. has been slapped with one count of conspiring to commit money laundering in a multibillion-dollar illicit shipment of gold, which was “likely” smuggled out of Venezuela through Curaçao and the Cayman Islands between March 2015 and September 2016. - [Latin Times on 25-JUN](#)
- Venezuela's public sector is surviving on starvation. The highest monthly salary for someone working in public administration is less than US\$10 – many working in the public sector now take second or even third jobs to make ends meet. - [Buenos Aires Times on 25-JUN](#)
- State media reports Maduro participates in the XIX Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), which is taking place in Venezuela at purpose of the bicentennial of the Battle of Carabobo. - [Venezuelan Ministry of Economics and Finance on 24-JUN \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- As hyperinflation and US sanctions disrupt Venezuela's economy, cryptocurrency is emerging as a way to provide services handled elsewhere by the traditional banking system. It has become a tool to send remittances, protect wages from inflation and help businesses manage cash flow in a quickly depreciating currency, according to interviews with crypto users and experts. - [Reuters on 22-JUN](#)
- Matthew John Heath, a Tennessee resident and former U.S. Marine, stands accused of terrorism by the brutal Maduro regime. Venezuelan authorities imprisoned Heath in September 2020 after claiming he possessed military-grade weapons and a satellite-locked phone while entering the country. Heath denies the allegations, and experts say evidence of weapon possessions was likely planted after his arrest. - [Washington Free Beacon on 16-JUN](#)
- On May 20, three years after his “victory” in the presidential elections Maduro said that elections are the “only possible way” to restore security and justice for the country. - [Rio Times on 20-MAY](#)
- The deputy of the National Assembly elected in 2015, Daniel Antequera, reported a “corruption network” on anti-COVID-19 vaccines in Venezuela. He exposed to the parliamentarian Lara that it is increasingly common to hear people offering "new prices and ways" to be immunized against the coronavirus. - [El Impulso on 18-MAY \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- The Venezuelan opposition led by Juan Guaidó proposes to investigate the "financing" of the COVID-19 supplies made by the Maduro regime since the pandemic began. The Venezuelan opposition will investigate the Maduro regime's purchase of supplies from countries such as Cuba, China, Russia and Iran after registering that since March 2020

more than 30 planes have arrived from those countries of which shipment details (amounts and payments made in the agreements) are unknown. - [Infobae on 18-MAY \(content in Spanish\)](#)

COLOMBIA CRISIS

- Colombia has arrested 10 people accused of involvement in attacks on a helicopter carrying President Ivan Duque and a military base last month that officials said were planned by former FARC rebel leaders based in Venezuela. - [Reuters on 22-JUL](#)
- Colombian police said that they had arrested 70 people following fresh anti-government protests that mobilized thousands countrywide the previous day and left dozens injured. - [Voice of America on 21-JUL](#)
- Colombia will begin "the maximum deployment" of military personnel in the western province of Valle del Cauca and its capital, Cali, President Ivan Duque said, after four people died in protests to mark a month of anti-government demonstrations. - [Reuters on 29-MAY](#)
- An officer of the Venezuelan Navy proposes to form a "professional resistance" to overthrow the Maduro regime. Frigate Lieutenant Diego Armando Comisso Urdaneta promotes a non-violent movement, although he acknowledges that sooner or later they will need an aggressive response from the Chavista government - [Infobae on 24-MAY \(content in Spanish\)](#)

PERU ELECTIONS

- The Nicaraguan government congratulated the president-elect of Peru, Pedro Castillo, in a message in which he applauded the Bicentennial of the independence of the South American country, and recalled the ties that unite both nations. - [Perú 21 on 28-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Argentine President Alberto Fernández flew to Lima to attend the inauguration of Peru's new president-elect Pedro Castillo. The event coincided with celebrations marking the bicentennial of Peruvian independence, declared on July 28, 1821 by Argentine General José de San Martín. - [Buenos Aires Times on 27-JUL](#)
- The President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, added to the congratulations that Pedro Castillo has received after being recognized by the National Elections Jury (JNE) as the elected president of our country for the period 2021-2026. - [Perú 21 on 24-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- The president of Bolivia, Luis Arce Catacora, announced that he would come to Peru to attend the investiture of Pedro Castillo as Constitutional President, which took place Wednesday, July 28. - [Perú 21 on 23-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)

- Nine days before the date for the change of command and 43 days after the second presidential round, the National Elections Jury (JNE) proclaimed Pedro Castillo as the elected president of the Republic for the period 2021-2026. - [Perú 21 on 21-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- The Special Team of the Special Corporate Supraprovincial Prosecutor's Office on Crimes of Corruption of Officials ordered to initiate preliminary proceedings against Mark Vito Villanela, husband of the leader of Fuerza Popular, Keiko Fujimori, for the alleged crime of money laundering. - [Perú 21 on 20-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Maduro congratulated Pedro Castillo, tweeting “I congratulate the Peruvian people and professor Pedro Castillo, who has been proclaimed today #19Jul, as the new President of Peru. A new political cycle is opening that we hope will be successful for this South American nation.” - [Perú 21 on 20-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- On July 10, Peru’s attorney general’s office opened “preliminary investigations” into members of congress who ignored an order by a supreme court judge to suspend the election of six magistrates to the constitutional court. - [Latin News Daily on 12-JUL](#)
- On July 4, Keiko Fujimori, the presidential candidate of the right-wing Fuerza Popular party in Peru’s June 6 presidential run-off election, called on the national electoral court not to declare Pedro Castillo, her run-off rival from the left-wing Perú Libre party, the winner of the election following the emergence of new allegations of illegal campaign financing at Perú Libre. - [Latin News Daily on 05-JUL](#)
- Peru's government rejected a request by presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori to seek an international audit of its June 6 election, leaving her with little recourse to overturn the apparent lead over her rival candidate Pedro Castillo. - [Reuters on 03-JUL](#)
- On July 1, the former presidential candidate, Alfredo Barnechea, called for a “civic-military alliance” to prevent the apparent winner of Peru's presidential election, Pedro Castillo, from taking office. - [Latin News Daily on 02-JUL](#)
- On June 24, Peru’s attorney general’s office designated Víctor Rodríguez Monteza as its new representative at the national electoral court (JNE), after its previous representative, Luis Arce Córdova, was suspended for saying he would not take part in deliberations relating to the disputed 6 June presidential election, accusing the JNE of showing a “*clear political bias*”. - [Latin News Daily on 25-JUN](#)
- A national television channel broadcast the recording of a call in which Edwar Quiroga, a follower of Pedro Castillo and close to Vladimir Cerrón, who heads the Inkarrí Islam Islamic movement, based in Apurímac, participated. In the audio, Quiroga assures that he will take violent actions if the JNE rules against Peru Libre. Fernando Lucena, who was on the other end of the phone when Quiroga made these statements, tells the details of this character. - [Peru 21 on 20-JUN \(content in Spanish\)](#)

BORDER CRISIS

- U.S. Border Patrol agents encountered one of the largest groups of migrants in recent memory when a caravan of 509 people from Central and South America was stopped after illegally crossing the United States-Mexico border into Texas. - [Daily Mail on 29-JUL](#)
- More than 100 (mostly Venezuelan) migrants crossed the border in an hour on July 21, according to a law enforcement source within Customs and Border Protection. The groups crossed into the United States in the early morning hours without regard to the swift currents of the Rio Grande caused by recent rains. Where migrants once could wade through shallow zones, the river has risen significantly. The area is patrolled by Border Patrol and Texas law enforcement authorities using airboats. - [Breitbart on 21-JUL](#)
- As U.S. Customs and Border Protection have been overwhelmed processing illegal migrants invited by Joe Biden into our country, Mexican drug cartels have flooded the southern border with deadly drugs, laundering the profits back to Mexico with the help of Chinese money men. - [Washington Examiner on 16-JUL](#)
- Many of the nearly 17,306 Venezuelans who have crossed the southern border illegally since January had been living for years in other South American countries, part of an exodus of millions since Maduro took power in 2013. While some are government opponents, the vast majority are escaping long-running economic devastation marked by blackouts and shortages of food and medicine. - [ABC News on 28-JUN](#)
- An increasing number of migrants from India, Romania, Haiti and Cuba are attempting to enter the US through the southern border, Axios reported. Border officials encountered over 33,000 migrants from countries other than Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador attempting to enter the US in April, according to Customs and Border Protection (CBP). - [Daily Caller on 27-MAY](#)

HAITI CRISIS

- The Biden administration announced the appointment of a special envoy to help coordinate US assistance and promote peace in Haiti following the assassination of Haitian president Jovenel Moïse earlier this month. Daniel Foote, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, was appointed to the role by the State Department. - [CNBC on 22-JUL](#)
- A convicted cocaine trafficker is among the suspects that authorities in Haiti are pursuing in connection to the middle-of-the-night murder of former President Jovenel Moïse, raising questions about whether organized crime had any role in the high-profile assault. - [InSight Crime on 15-JUL](#)
- Christian Emmanuel Sanon is the third person arrested in connection with the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse who reportedly had ties to the United States. Authorities have said he was one of the masterminds behind the plan and that he wanted

to assume the presidency, according to the Washington Post. Haiti National Police Chief Leon Charles said multiple suspects already in custody mentioned Sanon. - [Washington Examiner on 12-JUL](#)

- Haitian police said they had arrested one of the suspected masterminds in the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, a Haitian man whom authorities accused of hiring mercenaries to oust and replace Moïse. - [Reuters on 11-JUL](#)
- The plot to assassinate Haitian President Jovenel Moïse ran through South Florida, according to statements of captured Colombians. Seventeen Colombians and two Haitian Americans from South Florida are in custody in Haiti. The detained claimed to have been recruited by an under-the-radar firm in Doral called CTU Security. It is run by a Venezuelan émigré, Antonio Enmanuel Intriago Valera. - [Tampa Bay Times on 11-JUL](#)
- The escalation in gang violence threatens to complicate — and be aggravated by — political efforts to recover from the brazen slaying of President Jovenel Moïse. Haiti's government is in disarray -- no parliament, no president, a dispute over who is prime minister, a weak police force. But the gangs seem more organized and powerful than ever. - [Voice of America on 11-JUL](#)
- Haitian opposition leader Pierre Reginald Boulos has hired a lobbyist as part of an effort to build support for his political party and encourage President Joe Biden to support an interim Haitian government. Art Estopinan, a former chief of staff to former Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.), a onetime chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, registered as a foreign agent working for Boulos. - [Haitian Times on 10-JUL](#)

CUBA PROTESTS

- State media reports representatives of Cuba expressed gratitude to China for the donation of 30 high-performance lung ventilators, and assessed the gesture as another show of the strong friendship between the two countries. Andro Vazquez, charge d'affaires at the Cuban Embassy in China, told Prensa Latina that the action shows the will of Chinese authorities and people to express their solidarity with Cuba at a time when the island-nation is going through a complex situation. - [Cuba si on 31-JUL](#)
- Cuba received shipments of food and medical supplies from allies Mexico, Russia, and Bolivia in a bid to ease shortages and discontent amid the island's worst economic crisis in decades and a surge in coronavirus cases. - [Reuters on 30-JUL](#)
- Cuba's Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR) announced the death of Reserve General Manuel Eduardo Lastres Pacheco, making him the fourth high-ranking officer to pass away in just over a week. - [MercoPress on 28-JUL](#)

- Aleksandar Vulin, Serbia's Interior Minister, told the Cuban ambassador to Serbia Gustavo Tristá del Todo that Belgrade supported Havana's right to bring its decision independently. - [N1 on 28-JUL](#)
- Mexico's president asserted his country's right to send fuel to Cuba and said US sanctions on the island were "inhumane," after a diesel cargo shipped by Mexico's state-run oil company Petroleos Mexicanos arrived in Cuba's Havana port. Mexico's AMLO has criticized the US embargo against Cuba and pledged support for the Communist-run island. - [Reuters on 27-JUL](#)
- Miguel Diaz-Canel thanked his Venezuelan counterpart, Nicolas Maduro, for his solidarity with Cuba and his condemnation of the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States. - [Prensa Latina on 26-JUL](#)
- State media reports Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko expressed his country's solidarity with Cuba in defense of its independence, national sovereignty and against foreign pressure and interference in Cuba's internal affairs. - [Prensa Latina on 26-JUL](#)
- The foreign ministers of the United States and 20 other countries condemned mass arrests in Cuba and called for full restoration of Internet access in the island nation that has recently been rocked by political unrest. The joint statement was issued by the governments of Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Guatemala, Greece, Honduras, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Republic of Korea, and Ukraine, alongside the United States. - [Reuters on 26-JUL](#)
- Mexico's state-owned Pemex has dispatched a fuel cargo to Cuba, making good on the Mexican government's pledge to help the island to weather a crisis that sparked rare protests last week. - [Argus Media on 26-JUL](#)
- State media reports Russia's Defense Ministry has sent two planes loaded with aid to its long-time partner Cuba, which has been reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with food and medicine shortages. Two Cuba-bound An-124 large cargo planes carrying food, protective gear, and more than a million masks have taken off from Chkalovsky Air Base, the Russian Defense Ministry said. - [RT on 24-JUL](#)
- The massive presence of Cubans in the streets after 62 years of dictatorship set off the alarms in a few countries. The nations with the greatest concern for the geopolitical and economic dominance of the region, such as China, Russia and Iran, which have found in Latin America tokens for their strategic game against the United States, are the ones that have shown the greatest interest in preserving the Cuban regime to continue consolidating its presence in Latin America, specialists maintain. - [Hispano Post on 23-JUL](#)
- North Korea has declared its support for Cuba, joining the likes of Russia, China and Iran as the United States backed mass demonstrations accusing the island nation's ruling

Communists of shortcomings in addressing humanitarian needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. - [Newsweek on 16-JUL](#)

- State media reports Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a statement that Washington must stop its unilateral sanctions against other countries including Cuba. - [Iran Front Page on 14-JUL](#)
- Video emerged on social media showing anti-government protesters in Cuba holding an American flag during their effort to end the country's communist dictatorship blamed for the worsening conditions. Giancarlo Sopo, a communication strategist who, according to the Federalist, once worked on former President Trump's re-election campaign, tweeted a video of protesters holding an American flag while they marched. - [Fox News on 12-JUL](#)
- Cuba's communist regime is trying to blame the US for the huge uprising against its totalitarian government — as it also calls on “revolutionaries” to take to the streets and “fight” any anti-government protesters. - [New York Post on 12-JUL](#)
- Thousands of Cubans marched on Havana's Malecon promenade and elsewhere on the island Sunday, July 11 to protest food shortages and high prices amid the coronavirus crisis, in one of biggest anti-government demonstrations in memory. Many young people took part in the afternoon protest in the capital, which disrupted traffic until police moved in after several hours and broke up the march when a few protesters threw rocks. - [CBS News on 12-JUL](#)
- In a country known for repressive crackdowns on dissent, the rallies were widely viewed as astonishing. Activists and analysts called it the first time that so many people had openly protested against the Communist government since the so-called Maleconazo uprising, which exploded in the summer of 1994 into a huge wave of Cubans leaving the country by sea. - [The New York Times on 11-JUL](#)
- State media reports Russia reiterated this week its support for Latin American allies, mainly Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua given the standing “external threats,” stated Moscow's defense minister General Sergey Shoigu who underlined the historic links with the three countries. - [Merco Press on 25-JUN](#)

BOLIVARIAN NETWORK

- Prosecutors in El Salvador have charged former President Salvador Sanchez Ceren and nine former officials with illicit enrichment and money laundering. The accusations relate to crimes allegedly committed when he served as vice-president to President Mauricio Funes from 2009 to 2014. Known as the Public Looting scandal, the case involves \$351m (€298m) in government funds which were said to have been used to make exorbitant, illegal payments to government employees and their associates. - [GRC World Forums on 27-JUL](#)

- While some Salvadorans situated near Playa El Zonte beach like the new bitcoin tender law implemented by Nayib Bukele's regime, a number of other citizens dislike the law. This week, regional reports show citizens from El Salvador have taken to the streets to protest the bitcoin tender law. - [Bitcoin.com on 24-JUL](#)
- Prosecutors in El Salvador have issued an arrest warrant for former president Salvador Sánchez Cerén on charges of embezzlement and money laundering. Attorney General Rodolfo Delgado said the charges are related to crimes allegedly committed when Sánchez Cerén served as vice-president in the administration of Mauricio Funes from 2009 to 2014. Sánchez Cerén went on to serve as president from 2014 to 2019, and is also being charged with illicit enrichment. - [Daily Mail on 23-JUL](#)
- The Public Ministry of Argentina opened an investigation to find out if the former president Mauricio Macri sent arms to Bolivia to support what became known as the coup against Evo Morales. The current Argentine president, Alberto Fernández, has echoed the accusations and even apologized to the Bolivian people for sending the weapons. - [Prime Time Zone on 17-JUL](#)
- President Andrés Manuel López reiterated that he will not try to be reelected "by principle and conviction," but called on his cabinet to apply and not encourage this possibility "nothing that takes time." - [El Universal on 17-JUL \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Mexico's Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard expressed his country's desire to reopen relations with North Korea, after his government also voiced support for the Cuban government amid large-scale protests in the Caribbean island nation. - [Newsweek on 17-JUL](#)
- On July 3, massive anti-government protests were held across Brazil on the same day that the supreme court (STF) authorised an investigation into President Jair Bolsonaro's alleged knowledge of apparent corruption in a deal to procure coronavirus vaccines. - [Latin News Daily on 05-JUL](#)
- On July 4, some members of Chile's new 155-member constituent convention initially refused to participate in its inauguration, resulting in a delayed start. - [Latin News Daily on 05-JUL](#)
- El Salvador recently approved a law making Bitcoin — the world's most popular of more than a thousand cryptocurrencies — a legal currency there as of September. The reaction was immediate, although there was no agreement on the importance of the move. - [The Hill on 03-JUL](#)
- The US government designated two Salvadoran officials under the "corrupt and undemocratic actors" for allegedly helping China and profiting from their decisions. The US Embassy in El Salvador said former mayor Ezequiel Milla allegedly abused his authority to sell the Caribbean island of Perico to "agents of the People's Republic of China in exchange for personal benefit." - [Yahoo News on 02-JUL](#)

- On July 1, opposition parties and civil society groups called for the removal of Conan Castro, the current legal advisor to El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele; Labour Minister Rolando Castro; deputy security minister and director of prisons, Osiris Luna; and Carolina Recinos, Bukele's chief of cabinet. - [Latin News Daily on 02-JUL](#)
- Lawmakers in El Salvador voted to keep the head of the Supreme Court in place for three more years and appointed five new justices, triggering concerns that President Nayib Bukele is shoring up a bid to consolidate power. - [Reuters on 30-JUN](#)
- A representative of the company Davati Medical Supply stated, in an interview with the Folha de São Paulo newspaper, that he had received a request for a bribe of US\$1 per dose to close a contract with the Ministry of Health. - [Folha de Pernambuco on 29-JUN](#)
- After passing the law to make Bitcoin a legal tender in El Salvador, President Nayib Bukele took a radical step to accelerate the adoption of Bitcoin by offering \$30 worth of Bitcoin to any citizen who signs up for the new digital wallet by the government. The new Bitcoin wallet is called Chivo, a slang term for "cool" in El Salvador, and it can hold both Bitcoin and US dollars. - [Nasdaq on 28-JUN](#)
- Secretary General Rodolfo Sabonge and his delegation met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela Jorge Arreaza, along with Vice Minister Raúl Licausi and Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago Carlos Pérez. - [Association of Caribbean States on 24-MAY](#)
- Argentine President Alberto Fernández said the "problem" of human rights in Venezuela was "disappearing" and insisted there was no need for blockades when the way to solve these issues is through dialogue. Fernández once again expressed his support to the report on that matter drafted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (and former Chilean two-time President) Michelle Bachelet. - [MercoPress on 19-MAY](#)