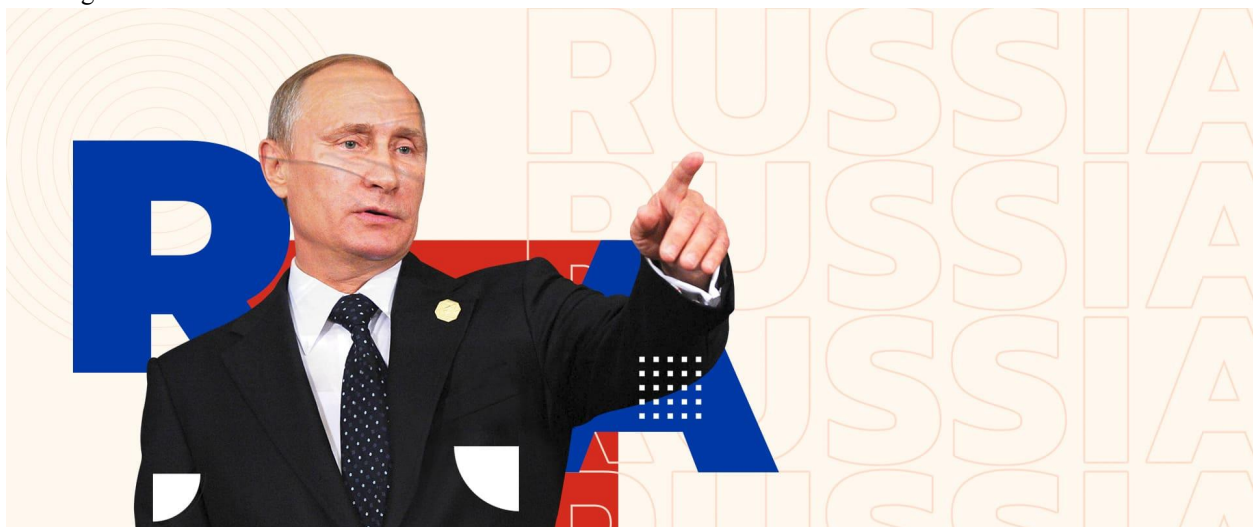




RUSSIA'S ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

January & February 2022

The following is a summary of open-source media reporting on Russia's presence and activities in Latin America and the Caribbean in January & February 2022. 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.



- Brushing off pressure from traditional ally the United States and within his own cabinet, Bolsonaro decided to go ahead with meeting Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, with highly awkward diplomatic timing, amid the tense standoff between Moscow and the West over Ukraine. He says the visit is about building trade relations. - [France24 on 13-FEB](#)
- Russia has promised that military equipment given to Venezuela will not be used to attack Colombia, destabilize Latin America, or end up in the hands of illegal armed groups, Colombia's foreign minister and Vice President Marta Lucia Ramirez said. - [Reuters on 08-FEB](#)
- The intelligence report on Russian interference in Venezuela and Colombia. President Ivan Duque will seek to speak with Russia to understand military assistance in Venezuela. - [El Tiempo on 07-FEB \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Russia will have a digital attaché in Havana to promote its information and communication technologies in Cuba, according to Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko. The island will not be the only one to welcome one of these envoys; up to 16 countries that will do so, including Brazil, Malaysia, and Vietnam. The rest are considered candidates such as Germany, South Korea, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Singapore, the South African Republic, Thailand and Turkey. - [14ymedio on 07-FEB](#)
- Two leading voices in Congress on Latin America have introduced bipartisan legislation to spur closer U.S. security cooperation in the region and turn back what they see as the growing, malign influence of China and Russia. Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, the ranking member of the Select Committee on Intelligence, and Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Bob Menendez introduced what they dubbed the “Western Hemisphere Security Strategy Act.” - [Associated Press on 07-FEB](#)
- As soon as Moscow received an American response to its security demands in Ukraine, it answered indirectly by announcing greater military integration between it and three South American countries, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Cuba. Washington's response, on January 26, to Russia's demands of withdrawing NATO forces from Eastern Europe and ending talks about a possible Kyiv membership in the US-led alliance, was noncommittal. - [Middle East Monitor on 06-FEB](#)
- Russia dismissed Colombian claims of “foreign interference” on the side of Venezuela as the South American neighbors quarrel over deadly fighting on their common border. Colombian Defense Minister Diego Molano cited intelligence that Venezuelan military units had been “mobilized to the border with the support and technical strength of Russia.” The minister denounced “foreign interference” on the part of Moscow in the border area, where two Colombian guerrilla groups are fighting a deadly battle that has intensified since the beginning of the year. - [Digital Journal on 04-FEB](#)

- The president of Argentina, Alberto Fernández, offered his country to Russia as a "gateway" to Latin America at the beginning of the meeting in the Kremlin with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin. "The environment is very favorable. - [Gente on 03-FEB \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- State media reports Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro expects his upcoming visit to Russia, due in February, to be a success, the leader has said in an interview with Brazil's RecordTV. "We have businesslike relations with Russia, including in the issue of fertilizers," he said. "The [Brazilian] delegation will include Agriculture Minister Tereza Cristina, who will engage in talks on agribusiness. Have no doubts, this visit will be a success." In early December, Bolsonaro announced he would visit to Russia on an invitation from Russian President Vladimir Putin. He said both countries were interested in the visit, stressing his determination to "deepen relations with Russia." - [TASS on 31-JAN](#)
- Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov warned in a January 13 television interview that his government wouldn't rule out the deployment of "military assets" to Venezuela and Cuba if the U.S. continues to defend Ukrainian sovereignty. White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan dismissed the comment as a "bluster." - [Wall Street Journal on 30-JAN](#)
- Russian President Vladimir Putin is working with leaders from Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua to develop a deeper strategic partnership, including military cooperation, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announced, Kremlin-funded RT reports. "President Putin held recent telephone conversations with his colleagues from these three governments, with whom we are very close and friendly, and they agreed to look at further ways to deepen our strategic partnership in all areas, with no exceptions," Lavrov told colleagues outside of Russian parliament. - [Just The News on 26-JAN](#)
- Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed coordination of a "strategic partnership" on the global arena in a phone call with Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel, the Kremlin said. - [Reuters on 24-JAN](#)
- State media reports Venezuela's Maduro has stated that Caracas does not accept provocations and manipulations directed against Russia during a conversation with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, according to a statement by Venezuela's Foreign Ministry made public following the conversation of the two leaders. - [TASS on 21-JAN](#)
- Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, who headed January 10 talks with U.S. officials in Geneva, said he could neither "confirm nor exclude" the possibility of a Russian military build-up within the borders of Cuba and Venezuela if tensions continue with the United States over Ukraine. Ryabkov's statement adds pressure to existing tensions with the West over the presence of Russian troops near the Ukraine border, which prompted a high stakes meeting with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on January 12 in Vienna. - [Epoch Times on 13-JAN](#)

- State media reports the agreement between the governments of Russia and Belize on the abolition of visas for mutual trips of citizens of the two countries came into force. The agreement was signed in New York on September 23, 2021. - [TASS on 12-JAN](#)
- State media reports more than 6,881 Russian tourists have visited Venezuela, entering through Margarita Island, and continue to arrive to enjoy the natural advantages of the country and the warmth of its people, the Minister of People's Power for Tourism, Ali Padrón, reported. - [Así Somos on 11-JAN \(content in Spanish\)](#)