

Russia Signs Security, Energy Deals With Venezuela

By [AFP](#)

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Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko.

Alexandr Kryazhev / POOL / TASS

Venezuela and its most powerful ally Russia signed agreements Thursday on intelligence-gathering and counter-espionage, as well as energy cooperation, during a visit by a senior Kremlin official to Caracas.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko told Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodriguez that his country stood ready to support Venezuela's armed forces with "the most sophisticated weapons and military equipment," according to remarks translated by Venezuelan state TV.

The two countries agreed to cooperate in areas including "intelligence and counter-espionage issues," the use of drones and petroleum exploration technology, the moderator of the talks said.

Later, in a ceremony at the Miraflores Palace, President Nicolas Maduro said the 17 agreements would "seal and strengthen the path of union and cooperation" between Venezuela and Russia "from now until 2030 and beyond."

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Russia is one of the few countries to have recognized leftist Maduro's claim to have won a third consecutive term in the July 28 election, which was disputed by the opposition and later saw widespread protests break out.

The United States and several Latin American countries have backed opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia as the rightful winner, based on detailed election results published by the opposition. Venezuelan election authorities aligned with Maduro have yet to release a vote breakdown.

Caracas drew closer to Moscow under socialist leader Hugo Chavez, who led the country on a hard-left, anti-U.S. platform from 1999 until his death from cancer in 2013. Those ties have endured under Chavez's hand-picked successor Maduro, who has defended Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Venezuela has the world's largest proven oil reserves and once produced more than three million barrels a day of oil — long its only notable foreign currency earner.

Following years of mismanagement and crushing sanctions, output has dropped to around one million barrels.

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