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Venezuela's Maduro Seeks Russian Military Support Amid U.S. Buildup in Caribbean – Washington Post

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President Vladimir Putin shakes hands with Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro during a meeting at the Kremlin, May 7. **Alexander Zemlianichenko / Pool / TASS**

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro has asked Russian President Vladimir Putin for military assistance as the U.S. concentrates forces in the Caribbean, The Washington Post reported Friday, citing internal U.S. government documents it obtained.

According to the report, Maduro requested help to strengthen Venezuela's air defense systems, including the delivery of 14 missile units and the restoration of several Russian-made Sukhoi Su-30MK2 fighter jets that Caracas previously purchased.

He also asked for overhauls of eight engines and five radars as well as unspecified "logistical support."

Maduro's written appeal to Putin was delivered by Venezuelan Transportation Minister

Ramón Celestino Velásquez during a visit to Moscow in mid-October in which he met with his Russian counterpart, the documents said.

The letter reportedly described the Su-30 jets as "the most important deterrent the Venezuelan National Government had when facing the threat of war."

The Venezuelan leader also sought a "medium-term financing plan of three years" through Russian state defense conglomerate Rostec, though the amount was not specified.

It remains unclear whether Russia has responded to the request, The Washington Post noted.

Venezuela is one of Russia's closest allies in South America, with Caracas having strengthened ties with Moscow under late socialist leader Hugo Chávez.

Putin and Maduro this year signed a strategic partnership treaty in Moscow, the latest in a series of alliances Russia has forged since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

But The Washington Post cited observers as saying that Moscow, mired in the Ukraine war and seeking to strengthen ties with other regional partners, would have limited capability or interest in coming to Caracas' aid if the U.S. were to launch a full operation inside the country.

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