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Moscow Warns Trump Against Making ‘Fatal Mistake’ as Tensions With Venezuela Rise

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Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro and Vladimir Putin. **Kristina Kormilitsyna / brics-russia2024.ru**

Russian officials on Thursday warned the Trump administration against making what they called a “fatal mistake” as tensions between the United States and Venezuela escalate, while saying Moscow remains in close contact with authorities in Caracas.

U.S. President Donald Trump this week ordered a “complete blockade” of sanctioned oil tankers entering and leaving the South American country, a dramatic escalation in his apparent campaign to oust Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro, a close ally of Moscow.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry said it hoped Trump would “not make a fatal mistake and will refrain from further sliding into a situation that could lead to unpredictable consequences for the entire Western Hemisphere.” The ministry called for de-escalation and reiterated its support for Maduro’s government.

The Kremlin echoed that position, with top spokesman Dmitry Peskov telling reporters at a daily briefing that Moscow was in "constant contact" with its "ally and partner" Venezuela.

"We urge all countries in the region to show restraint in order to avoid any unpredictable development in this situation," Mr. Peskov said, adding that President Vladimir Putin had recently spoken by phone with Maduro.

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Trump's intentions toward Venezuela are unclear. While he has framed a large U.S. military build-up in the Caribbean as targeting drug trafficking networks that he accuses of operating with Maduro's backing, the president has also hinted that he is interested in regime change.

During previous periods of tension between Washington and Caracas, Russia quietly bolstered Venezuela's defenses, including by dispatching about 100 technical advisers to help service military equipment.

It remains uncertain what support, if any, Moscow would offer its key ally in the region should the standoff escalate further, including in the event of broader U.S. military action against the Maduro government.

Venezuela on Wednesday asked the UN Security Council to hold an emergency meeting in response to threats from Washington.

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