



November 13, 2025

The Honourable Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Maninder Sidhu, Minister of International Trade
The Honourable David J. McGuinty, Minister of National Defence

Delivered by email

Re: Unlawful, lethal U.S. airstrikes in Latin America and the Caribbean

Dear Minister Anand, Minister Sidhu and Minister McGuinty,

As Canadian civil society organizations with decades of experience working with partner organizations in the Americas, we urgently call on the Canadian government to use all diplomatic means to publicly condemn and call for a halt to U.S. airstrikes on civilian boats in Latin America and the Caribbean.

From September to the beginning of November, [at least 19 reported bombings of civilian vessels](#) off the coasts of Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Dominican Republic and Mexico have killed dozens of people. Human rights organizations like [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) conclude the operations constitute extrajudicial killings. [The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other UN experts have also sounded the alarm](#), warning that the airstrikes violate international human rights law and must stop immediately.

Canada must speak out firmly and unequivocally to protect the rule of law and security in the region. Our organizations and our partners are deeply concerned about the consequences of [expanded U.S. military deployment in Latin America](#) and [alarming new powers to use lethal force](#) without oversight against targets that the Trump administration has designated as so-called 'narco terrorists' without presenting any evidence. As [UN Assistant Secretary-General Miroslav Jenča said in a briefing to ambassadors in the Security Council](#), U.S. operations have heightened dangerous tensions in the region. There is no doubt they pose a serious, growing threat to peace, security and the rule of law.

While President Trump [is reported to have backtracked on previous assertions](#) that the U.S. was considering strikes inside Venezuela, the ongoing threat of expanded US military operations, not only at sea but in Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico, is being taken extremely seriously and has been firmly opposed in public statements by several regional heads of states, including [Mexico's Claudia Sheinbaum](#), [Brazil's Luiz Inácio da Silva](#) and [Colombia's Gustavo Petro](#).

As the Trump administration shows its readiness to treat the Caribbean and eastern Pacific like a warzone and disregard international law, we must also ask you about Canada's military collaboration and potential complicity in U.S. operations. According to the [Canadian government's website](#), Operation CARIBBE contributes "to U.S.-led enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean" with Royal Canadian Navy warships and Royal Canadian Airforce aircraft deployed to "find and track" vessels "of interest" for "interception" by the U.S., under a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. since 2010.

Given the orders that are now being implemented by the U.S. Southern Command, we urge Canada to suspend Operation CARIBBE and its Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. to avoid any risk of Canadian intelligence being used in unlawful, lethal attacks. According to [media reports](#), the United Kingdom has stopped sharing some intelligence with the U.S. over concerns about the legality of its military strikes on alleged drug boats. Canada should be focused on building peace in the region, not supporting U.S. military efforts, especially when those operations may involve violations of international law and human rights.

We are deeply disturbed to learn that Canadian-built military surveillance and targeting equipment was used in at least two of the U.S. attacks, as [recently reported by Project Ploughshares](#). Canada is legally bound to ensure that its export of military goods does not contribute to violations of international law yet a decades-old agreement between Canada and the United States allows the transfer of most military goods between the two countries to bypass export controls designed to prevent Canadian technology from contributing to abuses. This loophole must be closed.

Canada must not be complicit as the Trump administration undermines peace and security in Latin America and the Caribbean with [authoritarian actions that erode human rights protections, foster a climate of fear as a justification for the use of illegal force, and circumvent the rule of law both domestically and internationally](#). Instead, the Canadian government should follow the lead of the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) who spoke out in October expressing 'unequivocal support' for sovereignty, territorial integrity and maintaining the [Caribbean region as a Zone of Peace](#). This reaffirms a landmark declaration by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in 2014 which proclaimed Latin America and the Caribbean as a [Zone of Peace](#).

In conclusion, we urge Canada to:

- Join other countries in expressing deep concern and calling for a halt to unlawful attacks and extrajudicial killings of civilians in the Caribbean and Pacific by the U.S. military.
- Contribute to the promotion of peace and security in the region, including by supporting the efforts of human rights bodies and international allies to collectively press the Trump administration to respect national sovereignty and uphold the rule of law.

- Suspend participation in Operation CARIBBE to avoid the risk of Canadian complicity in extrajudicial killings and violations of international law.
- As per Canada's obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, remove current regulatory exemptions that allow loopholes for the export of arms to the U.S. without oversight or human rights risk assessment.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss our concerns and urgent calls for action.

Sincerely,



Kathy Price, National Network Coordinator
Americas Policy Group



Caren Weisbart, National Coalition Coordinator
Common Frontiers

The Americas Policy Group (APG) is a national network of Canadian civil society organizations working for human rights and social and environmental justice in Latin America and the Caribbean. It brings together 22 international development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights organizations, labour unions, faith-based and solidarity groups, and research institutions.

Common Frontiers is a national coalition composed of labour, environmental, faith based and social justice organizations focused on the Americas. We amplify the struggles of organizations and communities with which our members hold long-term relationships throughout the region, and who work to defend democracy, human rights, labour rights, strong public services and the environment.