

## Trump reconfigures the venezuelan conflict: Order and chaos

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*When a great power redefines the moral map of a conflict, it does not describe the world—it reorganizes it. On November 17, the United States did not speak about Venezuela; it relocated Venezuela within the semiotic grid through which hemispheric order or chaos is decided.*

In foreign policy, presidential speeches are often treated as informational artifacts. But there are rare moments when a president does more than convey decisions: he rearranges the symbolic world in which those decisions can exist. The press conference delivered by Donald Trump, the 47th President of the United States, on November 17, accomplished precisely that. It delineated a moral map in which Venezuela ceased to be a country and became a *sign*—a marker of disorder Washington now claims it is prepared to correct.

### A World Split into Two Semiotic Poles

The message drew a sharp boundary: the United States embodies stability; Venezuela—exporter of crime and chaotic migration—embodies dislocation.

This is not rhetorical improvisation. It is narrative architecture.

To authorize forceful actions, the discourse required an absolute opposition:

- **Stability:** a firm border, a protective state, institutional control.
- **Disorder:** homicidal gangs, released prisoners crossing the border, a regime that cannot control its own territory.

From this contrast, Trump emerges not as a manager but as a restorer—the figure correcting a deviation produced by previous administrations.

Once a leader succeeds in installing such a frame, the public begins to interpret severe measures not as excesses, but as adjustments.

### The Dramatis Personae: Hero, Villain, Captive Audience

Every effective leader assigns roles.

In the November 17 declarations, this assignment was unmistakable:

- **Hero:** the president himself and his border-security apparatus.
- **Villain:** Nicolás Maduro's regime and its criminal satellites.
- **Victim:** American society, portrayed as infiltrated by the hemisphere's most violent individuals.
- **Innocent distinguished from culpable:** the Venezuelan people, explicitly vindicated.

This distinction between citizens and rulers is not sentimental; it is functional. It allows Washington to exert pressure without alienating future allies in a democratic transition. It is an established pattern in U.S. foreign policy: condemn the clique, rescue the country.

### **Violence as the Anchoring Signifier**

The words used to describe criminal groups were as graphic as they were strategic:

- "Killers"
- "Massacre people"
- "Cut them into pieces"

Such vocabulary does more than denounce a threat; it magnifies it to fix it in place. It constructs a universe in which the adversary ceases to be political and becomes inherently destructive.

Within such a conceptual setting, defensive or diplomatic measures appear insufficient.

A sharp response, by contrast, appears semantically inevitable.

### **The Apparent Contradiction: Speaking with the Demonized Other**

Despite the severity of his indictment, Trump introduced an unexpected gesture:

**"I would probably speak with Maduro. I talk to everybody".**

A contradiction? Not quite.

Within the discourse's field of forces, the possibility of dialogue does not soften the confrontation—it manages it. A subliminal message emerges: *You may be punished or you may negotiate; Washington controls both pathways.*

Negotiation is not framed as common ground but as an extension of power.

To speak with the adversary does not elevate him; it reduces him to a variable in a calculation already defined by the United States.

### **Conflict as Structured Narrative**

Discursive frameworks do not replace foreign policy, but they shape society's perception of conflict.

In 2025, that framework has the form of a moral quadrant:

- **Stability and protection** are assigned to the United States.
- **Chaos and threat** are projected onto the Venezuelan regime and its criminal networks.

This design not only legitimizes harsher sanctions or expanded interdiction measures; it prepares the public for a more assertive stage of coercion in the Caribbean.

The speech reveals something simple: the United States positions itself as guardian of equilibrium. Venezuela becomes a systemic fault line to be contained or reconfigured.

### **Conclusion: The Struggle for Equilibrium Is Already Underway**

In global politics, emotions rarely determine outcomes.

What matters is how leaders organize reality into intelligible categories—and the stories they craft to justify the use of power.

The message of November 17 established the following:

- Maduro's regime is framed as the primary source of regional disorder.
- The United States acts as the architect of a return to stability.
- Force and dialogue are not opposites; they belong to the same toolbox.
- The border becomes more than a geographical line: it is a moral frontier separating civilization from barbarism.

With this narrative, Washington is not merely speaking to its domestic audience; it is preparing the ground for its next moves.

In this new geopolitical tableau, order—or the definition of order—will be the work of the United States. And Venezuela, once again, becomes one of the places where that order will be tested.