



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on December 29, 2023

## U.K. Navy Deploys Ship to Guyana, Maduro Sends 5,000 Troops to Border

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro deployed 5,000 soldiers in response to [the U.K. deploying the Royal Navy patrol vessel HMS Trent](#) to Guyana in diplomatic and military support for the former British colony. Maduro claimed the presence of the patrol vessel in Guyana's sovereign waters is a provocation, saying, "We do not accept provocations, threats from anything or anyone."

Guyanese President Dr Irfaan Ali [responded on X, saying](#), "Neither Venezuela nor any other State has anything to fear from activities within Guyana's sovereign territory or waters. I have iterated before that we harbor no ambitions or intentions to covet what does not belong to us. We are fully committed to peaceful relations with our neighbors and all countries in our Region."



Shaun Roster/Wikimedia Commons  
HMS Trent

[Bloomberg reports Venezuelan Naval Commander Neil Villamizar announced](#) 5,682 personnel from multiple branches of the military, along with several ocean patrol vessels, missile boats, and 20 fighter aircraft were deployed to eastern areas of Venezuela near the border with Guyana.

On December 14, Ali and Maduro [reached an agreement to not use military force during talks](#) to resolve the Venezuelan claim to Guyana's Essequibo territory. [After the agreement a U.S. State Department official told McClatchy](#): "We continue to call for a peaceful resolution of the dispute and to respect the 1899 arbitral award that determined the land boundary between Venezuela and Guyana until the parties reach a new agreement or a competent legal body decides otherwise."

[McClatchy spoke with former Venezuelan interim President Juan Guaidó](#) and reported the exiled leader claims Venezuela lacks the military capability to annex the Essequibo territory: "Maduro doesn't have the capacity even to provide gasoline, water, energy, basic services. He wouldn't be able to sustain a conventional war." Guaidó also claimed Maduro is using the conflict to divert attention to his domestic failures, saying, "But I don't rule out that he would plant a flag, or do something like that, to divert attention from Venezuela's domestic problems and provoke an international conflict."



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