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Jeremy Paner Discusses Trump Statement Claiming US ‘Blockade’ of Sanctioned Oil Tankers in Venezuela

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Dec. 17, 2025 – Jeremy Paner spoke to [The Washington Post](#) about the impact of President Donald Trump’s statement claiming a “total and complete blockade” of all sanctioned oil tankers entering or leaving Venezuela.

The escalation is the latest in the Trump administration’s months-long pressure campaign against the government of President Nicolás Maduro. Last week, the [U.S. seized a sanctioned oil vessel off the Venezuelan coast](#).

Recently, Trump also declared the Venezuelan “regime” a foreign terrorist organization (FTO) and accused government officials of using oil to enrich themselves and finance drug terrorism. According to the Washington Post, it’s unclear whether he was declaring a new FTO or referring to the previously designated Cartel de los Soles, which the administration has claimed is headed by Maduro and other Venezuelan government officials.

According to Paner, this is an important distinction as other governments, including Iran and North Korea, are similarly blocked, but none is a designated terrorist organization.

“The difference is if it’s an FTO, you get this extraterritorial application of U.S. law, even if there’s no connection to the United States,” Paner said.

Under the designation, “if an individual or company provides any sort of assistance at all to the government,” Paner continued, they could “be grabbed.” Theoretically, he said, that could include executives of Chevron, which produces and exports Venezuelan oil in cooperation with the state-owned oil company, PDVSA, under a Treasury Department license.

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Jeremy P. Paner

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