

Colectivos: guardian angels of Socialism or the curses of Venezuela?

Saturday 17 April 2021 13:45 (15 minutes)

When talking about security issues in Latin America, some topics are expected to come up, such as paramilitary groups, and terrorism, that are in fact both about the struggle for power. Besides several similarities in these topics, most of the countries have developed their unique approach. The aim of the presentation is to give an overview of the Venezuelan case of Chávez's Bolivarian Revolution. Once meant for running various types of projects, community work, promoting government social programs, by now, colectivos have become an indispensable part of the Venezuelan regime. How have these civilian groups evolved? What are their main characteristics now? What is their role in keeping the failing state running? Are they terrorists, ordinary criminals, or patriots, saviors of the Bolivarian Revolution? How do they sustain themselves during the worst economic period of Venezuela? What are their relations with other entities of the regime? And last but not least, how can and should they be treated and controlled for a more prosperous future for the "Land of Grace".

Key words: Venezuela, colectivo, state-sponsored terrorism, Hugo Chávez, Nicolás Maduro

Abstract in Spanish or Hungarian (Presentation Language)

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Session Classification: English 2 - Security challenges and International Relations