

Press Releases: Interview With Matilde Burgos of CNN Chile

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Santiago, Chile
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QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, thank you for your time with CNN Chile.

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's wonderful to be with you.

QUESTION: Regarding to Venezuela, it has been three months since Juan Guaido is president in charge. We are in another stage. Why are you coming here now in South America 72 hours before the meeting of *Grupo de Lima*?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I came to Chile for a number of reasons, one of which was to talk about the challenge in Venezuela, how it is that together Chile, Brazil, Peru, the OAS, the Lima Group, all of us working together can get what the Venezuelan people so richly deserve: their democracy and off of the place they are today, under the thumb of the Cubans and the Russians and the Maduro regime.

I came also to talk about the important partnership between our two countries, the economic activity, the security activity that the United States and Chile conduct together. It was wonderful to be with President Pinera and my foreign minister counterpart as well.

QUESTION: And what did you come to ask for Chile specifically in relation with Venezuela?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So with respect to Venezuela, it was a thank you as much as anything else, but also we wanted to look each other in the eye and verify we're going to stay the course. This is an important mission that matters to the region, it matters to the United States, but most importantly, it matters to the Venezuelan people. And so we wanted to have a conversation about what are the things we could do, how can we continue to grow this coalition. Over 50 countries today have said that, no, Maduro, you're not the leader; Juan Guaido is the duly elected leader. We'll build out that coalition and we'll continue to isolate Maduro until such time as the Venezuelan people get what they deserve.

QUESTION: But there are 195 countries.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yep.

QUESTION: Only 54 support your plan?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So far only 54 have come across the line and gotten it right and spoken the truth about what Venezuela so richly deserves. But you should know that those months ago that you describe, there were none. This is an amazing coalition that's been put together. I wish that the Russians and the Chinese would stop interfering. It's kind of funny. They accuse the Americans and the Chileans of intervening when, in fact, they have soldiers on the ground; when in fact, the Cubans are running the security state apparatus inside of Venezuela. I think the Venezuelan people know that's wrong. I think the people of the world know that that's a tragedy. The Cubans need to go home.

QUESTION: Concerning Chile's President Pinera, such a good political partner of the U.S., as President Bolsonaro is?

SECRETARY POMPEO: They're both great friends of the United States. They are both leading democratic institutions, trying to do all they can to serve their people, to grow their own markets, their own economy, to provide security for their own people. They're both fantastic partners.

QUESTION: You have said recently it seems that the support of Russia, China, Cuba, Iran has been strong enough to support Maduro. Is the U.S. plan not working?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We're being incredibly successful. Take a look at the nations that you just identified. Look who those are. Look at the democratic values that are on the other side of that, right? Russia, no democratic values; China; Iran, killing hundreds of Americans and conducting terror campaigns all around the world, right? Hizballah here in South America fomenting terror. I am convinced that the people of South America understand who shares their values, who their friends are. And that – that value set, that common understanding about the right way to move forward – will lead us to the outcome that the Venezuelan people deserve. I am very convinced of that.

QUESTION: A few days ago you said Maduro is a threat for the U.S., and some time ago President Trump has said that all options are on the table. Are you asking for support in a potential military intervention in Venezuela?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Both of those statements are true. Maduro is definitely a threat to the United States of America. I went through the list of ways, I think, when I gave that answer. I won't go through them now. But the list is long about how it affects American lives, and the President has been unambiguous. We're going to use every tool in the American toolkit. I'm here; I'm America's most senior diplomat. I'm here today to figure out how we can get a political resolution that is the right outcome. But make no mistake about it: The United States refuses [\[1\]](#) to take any tool within our

capacity to deliver democracy for the Venezuelan people.

QUESTION: Militarism?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Every option.

QUESTION: It wasn't the first time for the U.S. to be involved in removing a leader in this region, but this time the region seems to be with the U.S.

SECRETARY POMPEO: In some ways the region is out in front of us. It's remarkable to watch countries from Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina – it's remarkable to see the nations of the region group together yesterday – Jamaica voted with us at the OAS to recognize Juan Guaido's designee as the proper representative inside of the OAS.

Yeah, this is a global coalition designed – not designed to overthrow Maduro. That's the outcome. What it's designed to do is restore the democracy that the Venezuelan people are demanding. Maduro has to go. It is not possible. He has destroyed this country for years and years and years. He has caused more hunger, more starvation, more deprivation in that country than any previous leader in Venezuela, so he'll have to leave. But our goal is more than that. Our goal is to make sure that democracy is restored to that great nation.

QUESTION: Chile will host the climate change conference in December. Does the U.S. Government still have doubts about the climate change?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The United States believes that the best solution to keeping every human being healthy are free markets, transparent rule of law, and economic success. The nations that are the safest, that have the cleanest air and the safest drinking water, are those that have the rule of law and democracy.

We've watched what's happened. We've watched nations that are part of the Paris agreement continue to spew carbon – indeed, more carbon than they were before. We live in the real world in the United States. President Trump is a realist. It's one thing to sign a piece of paper to make a commitment to reduce CO2. It's another thing to actually do it. We are convinced the United States will lead. Our innovation, our technology, is unequaled. And we're convinced that when we do that and do it well, that we'll still have clean air and safe drinking water for generations to come.

QUESTION: Chile is interested in enacting the 5G in Chile. President Pinera goes to China in a few days. Would the U.S. be concerned if Pinera accepted invitation to visit the Huawei plant in China?

SECRETARY POMPEO: He is the president of a sovereign nation. He gets to make decisions about who he sees or where he travels. What we talked about today and what we've said publicly is that Huawei is controlled by the Government of China. It is deeply connected. And so putting one's citizens' information on that kind of technology, on that Chinese infrastructure, presents real risk to the citizens of your country. And so we have urged nations to check it out, to see if we're right – we know that we are – and

then make good decisions for themselves.

And we have secondarily told them that, boy, if we're going to share information with you, Americans' information, or if we're going to work on security projects with you, we don't have confidence in those systems; and so if you put those systems, if you put systems that aren't trusted, untrusted systems inside your network, it will force the United States to make decisions about where we put our information as well.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. Pompeo –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you.

QUESTION: – for this time with CNN Chile.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, ma'am.

[\[1\]](#) The United states is not refusing to take any tool within our capacity...

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