



Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Communiqué

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its deepest concern after noting that all international reports show the alarming increase of illicit crops in the Republic of Colombia, as it was confirmed by Colombian president, Ivan Duque, on September 19th, 2018, which represents a serious regional and global threat.

In this sense, on July 18th, 2018, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) published the main findings of the 2018 World Drug Report, where it was highlighted that Colombia had, by 2016, 68.5% of the coca plantings of the world.

Moreover, on September 19th, the UNODC warned that by the end of 2017, Colombia had 171,000 hectares planted with coca, 25,000 more with respect to the amount registered in 2016. The report also shows an increase of 31% in the conversion rates of coca leaves into cocaine, which is equivalent to a production of 1,379 tons of this drug in 2017. Such data is seriously chilling, taking into account that this is the highest figure since the UN started monitoring such crops in 2001.

According to such report, one of the most affected departments is precisely the North of Santander, located at the border with Venezuela; this causes even more concern for the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, since groups linked to drug trafficking and paramilitary violence constantly attack Venezuelan population, economy and institutions from there.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urges the Colombian authorities to conduct real and effective efforts to solve such alarming situation, as well as to make good use of the huge amount of money that the international system has given them with good will for such purpose.

Likewise, Venezuela calls on the Colombian State to assume its international responsibilities for the damages caused by the drug trafficking industry to its neighboring countries and the world, by risking the region's peace, security and stability, and collaborating with the expansion of the scourge of drug trafficking and consumption, which has affected economies, youth and societies throughout the entire world.

Caracas, September 23rd, 2018