



Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Communiqué

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reports that on past December 31st, 2018, engineer LUIS ALFONSO LAZARO SUAREZ was rescued during land patrolling activities performed by Army, Navy and Bolivarian National Guard officers in El Amparo area, Apure state. Mr. Lazaro claimed to be a Colombian citizen who had been allegedly abducted in that country by illegal criminal armed groups.

During the Bolivarian National Armed Force joint operation, 7 (seven) Colombian citizens, who allegedly participated in the abduction of the abovementioned citizen, were arrested and are in the custody of military authorities for their respective prosecution.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela puts on record that, as from the very same day of the event, efforts to contact Colombian authorities were made through both diplomatic and military channels, in order to coordinate the handover of engineer Luis Alfonso Lazaro Suarez, in accordance with the protocols and law.

However, in light of the immediate inability to arrange the repatriation with the authorities from the neighbouring country, the Venezuelan Armed Force together with the Venezuelan Consul in Arauca, Dr. Miguel Miranda, accompanied engineer Luis Alfonso Lazaro Suarez to the border for his presentation before the Colombia's competent authorities, January 2nd, 2019.



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It is noteworthy that the Bolivarian National Armed Force responsibly fulfils its mission of ensuring our nation security by countering drug-trafficking, paramilitary, criminal bands, guerrilla dissidents, and any other form of violence from Colombia. However, it necessarily requires the bilateral cooperation with the authorities of that country, which to date has proven to be unsuccessful.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, once more, demonstrates with facts its permanent guard of the border, and warns Colombian violent groups that they shall be strongly combated if dare to commit crime in Venezuelan territory.

Caracas, January 2nd, 2019