

THE FALL OF MADURO

IN THE NARRATIVES OF LUKASHENKA'S STATE PROPAGANDA

Analytical review

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PREFACE

On the night of January 2-3, 2026, the U.S. conducted a special operation in Caracas to arrest Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. The U.S. justice system accuses Maduro of “narco-terrorism conspiracy, cocaine importation conspiracy, and possession of weapons against the United States,” according to a [statement](#) by U.S. Attorney General Pamela Bondy.

Maduro’s government conducted active business with Russia. Russian companies developed oil fields in Venezuela, sold weapons and equipment, and Russian military and paramilitary organizations guarded enterprises and trained the local army. Through joint concessions, the Kremlin simultaneously supported and controlled Maduro’s power. The country’s authoritarian leader himself was on friendly terms with Vladimir Putin and Aliaksandr Lukashenka.

The latter has consistently emphasized his support for the Venezuelan president. Lukashenka and Maduro have a lot in common – for example, neither of them has been recognized as a legitimate president by the EU or the U.S.

The most recent meeting between Maduro and Lukashenka took place in October 2024 at the BRICS summit in Kazan. At that time, embracing Maduro and giving him a friendly pat on the shoulder, Lukashenka [stated](#):

“It’s great to see our friends! We are always happy for you, your unyielding courage. We are very grateful for this courage, steadfastness. It gives us strength and confidence.”

In December 2025, in an interview with the American TV channel Newsmax, Lukashenka [called](#) Maduro a “decent man” and a “heroic guy” and promised that if he decided to leave the country after resigning as president, Belarus would be ready to take him in:

“Maduro has never been our enemy or adversary. If he wishes to visit Belarus, our doors are open to him.” ([BelTA](#), 16.12.2025)

Also at that time, during a meeting with John Coale, the U.S. President’s Special Envoy for Belarus, Lukashenka tried to warn the U.S. against invading Venezuela. According to him, if military action were to begin, “it would be a second Vietnam.” ([BelTA](#), 16.12.2025)

As expected, Lukashenka’s prediction did not come true. The rapid and successful operation by the DELTA special forces to capture Maduro met with almost no resistance from either the security forces or the army, or from the Venezuelan people as a whole. And the deposed president himself, instead of going to Minsk, was taken in handcuffs to New York to stand trial.

The propaganda’s response to the capture of Maduro can be described as aggressive and panicked. Moscow and Minsk immediately started talking about a “violation of international law,” while, of course, remaining silent about the fact that they themselves have long been under sanctions for serious violations of key international treaties and obligations due to their aggression against Ukraine.

In the comments of private channels of propagandists, there are two main trends: curses and insults directed at the U.S., and at the same time, admiration for the brilliant special operation, envy, and inevitable comparisons with the war in Ukraine, which in four years has not brought any tangible success to Putin's army.

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Aliaksandr Lukashenka's first reaction came only in the middle of the day on January 3, after the operation to capture Nicolas Maduro had already ended. The "president's" press secretary, Natallia Eismant, [conveyed](#) his words to the Russian news agency Novosti and posted a brief comment in capital letters on the press service's Telegram channel:

"THE PRESIDENT OF BELARUS STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE ACT OF AMERICAN AGGRESSION AGAINST VENEZUELA." ([Pul Pervogo](#) Telegram channel, 03.01.2026)

As is usually the case in unclear and critical situations, government agencies waited silently to hear what Lukashenka would say. Just a few minutes after Eismant's publication, the Belarusian Foreign Ministry issued a [statement](#) that also "categorically" condemned "armed aggression against a sovereign state."

For several days thereafter, Lukashenka remained silent and did not publicly defend his "friend" and "heroic guy." It was only on January 6, at the ceremony to appoint judges to the Constitutional Court of Belarus, that he made an extremely neutral statement about what had happened in Venezuela, while not forgetting to emphasize the role of the Constitutional Court in making decisions to prevent a similar situation in Belarus:

"Recent events in our friendly Venezuela. This is where the Constitutional Court played its role and made tough decisions. You can see the turbulence in the world that I have long warned about. In this situation, we must be careful, calm, and not rush, and much will depend on you, the judges. So keep that in mind, appreciate it, and protect the country." (Official [website](#) of the "president" of Belarus, 03.01.2026)

Finally, on January 8, speaking at the annual Spiritual Revival Award ceremony, Lukashenka broke down and spoke at length and emotionally about the situation in Venezuela. He described the people of that country as "a friendly nation" that had "lent us a helping hand" in the past:

"If anyone has forgotten [about this], I have not. And to some extent [the Venezuelan people] didn't save our country, but they did give us a lot of support," Lukashenka [said](#), probably referring to the support given to the Belarusian regime by both Venezuelan presidents, Hugo Chavez and Nicolas Maduro.

Lukashenka condemned the U.S. for its operation in Caracas and [stated](#) that "everyone will draw conclusions from this, and everyone will think about how to protect their country." He also hastened to assure the public – and, above all, himself – that such a scenario is "unrealistic" in Belarus:

“Do you remember last year's meeting of the Belarusian Security Council, where we assigned roles in case ‘what if there is no president’? Listen, it was like looking into a crystal ball. Therefore, the Venezuelan scenario is unrealistic in Belarus. Even if it happens, we have everything planned for this case.” ([BelTA](#), 08.01.2026)

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The first reaction of propaganda channels was emotional and chaotic. The passionate assessments of STV TV channel presenter Ryhor Azaronak stood out most clearly against the general background. He commented on the situation promptly, publishing about a hundred posts on Telegram and several articles in the state media over three days.

“A rotten, vile, bastard, savage country [obviously the U.S.], the scum of the earth, lying, dirty hypocrites, an insane superpower gangster.” ([Azaryonok. STV. Belarus](#) Telegram channel, 03.01.2026)

“Red creature, vile creature, evil two-legged creature” [obviously Trump]. ([Ibid.](#), 03.01.2026)

“Hugo Chavez’s grave is on fire. Maduro has been captured. The Judas have received their money. Oil will go to the [United] States. Venezuela no longer exists.” ([Ibid.](#), 03.01)

“Today, Venezuela was attacked. It was a cowardly, dirty, despicable, and malicious act. Truly, in order for the great ‘peacemaker’ to end the 10th conflict, he must start it. How dare Venezuela stand above American oil?” ([STV](#), 03.01.2026)

Later, Azaronak calmed down and compared Maduro to... Christ:

“Why will Maduro be executed? [...] Just like Christ in his time – because this simple bus driver, who became the leader of a great nation, dared to live outside the laws of the ruling global oligarchy.” ([Minskaya Prauda](#), 05.01.2026)

Kseniya Lebedzeva:

“Bastards. Nazi. Russophobe Callas supported Maduro’s capture.” ([LEBEDEVA](#) Telegram channel, 03.01.2026)

And, of course, according to commentators, the main goal of the seizure of power in Venezuela and the arrest of its president was Venezuelan oil.

Ruslan Shkodzin:

“What was the purpose of all this? The real goals are Venezuelan oil and external control of the country, as the President of the United States has openly stated. Of course, the international community must respond firmly to these events.” ([BELTA](#), 04.01.2026)

Ryhor Azaronak:

“You are to blame for the fact that I want to eat. You have oil – we are coming after you. We will steal, rob, take, and rule ourselves.” ([Minskaya Prauda](#), 04.01.2026)

Yauhen Pustavy:

“Venezuelan oil is very ‘tasty’ for the American oil refining industry.” ([STV | Novosti Belarus](#) Telegram channel, 03.01.2026)

Many commentators in Moscow and Minsk predictably took the events in Caracas personally – as a signal that they could be next. Azaronak, having cooled down a little, published advice in the pro-government newspaper Minskaya Prada the next day on how to avoid Belarus (i.e., Lukashenka) suffering the same fate as Maduro. In his opinion, the regime can only be protected by force, weapons, and total surveillance of each other:

“Strengthen defense in every way. Only iron, nuclear weapons, special forces, military alliances. [...] Increase vigilance. See sedition, see traitors. [...] What can make them [the West] respect others? Only the ability to inflict unacceptable damage. To hurt them. That's when they remember international law. Once again – strength, strength, and once again strength.” ([Minskaya Prada](#), 04.01.2026)

Aleh Haidukevich:

“The only thing that can stop aggression or military action against a country is force, nuclear weapons, Oreshnik, and the understanding that if they attack, the blow will be so severe that it will be impossible to ignore.” ([Sputnik.by](#), 03.01.2026)

Just as predictably, pro-government channels drew parallels between the operation in Caracas and Russia's “special military operation” in Ukraine, which has been going on for almost four years. Moreover, the comparisons were not in favor of the latter. An anonymous Telegram channel Belorusskiy Silovik, linked to the Belarusian Ministry of Internal Affairs, [published](#) a humorous image with the “schedule” for January 3 for American troops (“8:00 – breakfast, 9:00 – attack on Venezuela, 12:00 – lunch, 13:00 – capture of Caracas, 18:00 – Taylor Swift concert, 21:00 – fireworks”) and accompanied it with the following comment:

“Jokes aside, that's pretty much how it went in Venezuela. In the end, it took 2 hours, agents, paid informants, a couple of small strikes, taking control of the skies, and quietly transporting the leader of a neighboring country to the States. No comment, in short.”

An hour later, the Russian pro-war channel Dva Mayora [posted](#) the message by Belorusskiy Silovik with the following comment:

“Jokes aside, without undue reverence for [the Americans], they carried out the operation competently. It is unlikely that it was done without traitors inside the country, Maduro did not live in a bungalow. Surely, that is how our Special Military Operation was planned. Quickly, efficiently, and effectively. It is unlikely that Gerasimov [Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces] planned to fight for four years.”

Finally, on January 5, the Belarusian regime remembered its “peacekeeping mission.” Siarhei Rachkou, a member of the House of Representatives (parliament) of Belarus, proposed Belarus's mediation in the “Venezuelan-American dialogue.” Based on the principle of “if they don't agree, at least I'll make my mark”:

“In my opinion, our country, relying on its peaceful foreign policy, will always be ready to use its capabilities in Venezuela to facilitate constructive Venezuelan-American dialogue, to which there is no alternative.” ([BeITA](#), 05.01.2026)

Overall, the aggressive, yet panicky and enthusiastic tone of propaganda statements speaks to the Belarusian regime's complete helplessness in influencing major international events. The repeat of the main narratives from Russian propaganda channels once again demonstrates the ideological dependence of the Belarusian media on the lines set by the Kremlin.