

# MP-IDSA

## *Issue Brief*

# Correlating US Aggression on Cuba, Venezuela and Iran: The Oil Factor

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## **S***ummary*

Venezuela and Iran, the two countries that President Trump has targeted for military operations to date, along with the US, account for about one-third of global oil reserves. The endgames of the US aggression against Venezuela, Iran, and possibly Cuba in the near future may focus on long-term deals that include oil benefits. The Trumpian economic strategy hinges on access to cheap oil.

At the beginning of 2026, United States (US) forces abducted President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela with the intention of regime change, although the stated goals were different. We also witness the US facing extreme difficulty in breaking Iran’s will to fight, and Tehran is resisting regime change despite immense losses to its top leadership, military and civilian infrastructure. Cuba, too, has a standing threat issued by President Trump, who had been projecting himself as the ‘President of Peace’ until a few months ago.

Trump threatened Cuba with a “friendly takeover”<sup>1</sup> in “some form”,<sup>2</sup> along with choking the country by blockading its oil imports and threatening its suppliers. The country has been under duress with chronic blackouts due to a fuel shortage. Cuban authorities confirmed that there was no oil shipment from January 2026 until the end of March, when a Russian oil tanker arrived with a consignment of 730,000 barrels.<sup>3</sup> President Trump has repeatedly indicated that he would be focusing on his next target, Cuba, once the conflict with Iran is over.<sup>4</sup>

Venezuela and Iran are very different in terms of their political composition, power and identity, and neither of them is/was an imminent military threat to the US. Although Trump’s military actions have been framed as preemptive responses to the threat to US citizens, its core security interests and safety of assets, one factor that Trump has downplayed or not mentioned while stating his objectives is the presence and potential of oil reserves in the two countries.

President Trump’s actions against Cuba are perplexing as to why he would threaten a tiny island nation that cannot pose any real military or economic threat in the context of contemporary global geopolitics. The return of Cuba, which has gradually been phased out of high-level geopolitical discussions since the end of the Cold War, into US grand-strategic calculations, needs explanation. This brief examines President Trump’s desire to “take over” Cuba and highlights the oil variable correlating his rhetoric and actions on Cuba with operations in Venezuela and Iran.

## **The Façade and the Truth in Venezuela Operation**

On 3 January 2026, US forces abducted President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela, along with his wife, in Operation Absolute Resolve. The couple was accused of

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<sup>1</sup> [“Trump Threatens Cuba Again, Says Island Nation May Face ‘Friendly Takeover’”](#), *Al Jazeera*, 10 March 2026.

<sup>2</sup> [“Trump Says ‘Taking’ Cuba Would Be ‘Big Honor,’ That President ‘Can Do Anything I Want With It’”](#), USA Today Channel on YouTube, *YouTube*, 17 March 2026.

<sup>3</sup> Will Grant, [“Russian Oil Tanker Docks in Cuba Ending Near-Total Blockade”](#), *BBC News*, 31 March 2026.

<sup>4</sup> [“Cuba War Next? Trump Drops ‘Wait for Two Weeks’ Bombshell as Iran Conflict Explodes”](#), The Times of India Channel on YouTube, *YouTube*, 6 March 2026.

heading a drug network impacting the youth and families in the US. President Trump, who previously had reduced US foreign military commitments, expressing a desire for peace and economic prosperity of the US, has ironically been successful in putting military pressure on Venezuela to open up for ‘reforms’ and make structural changes to its economy, especially in the oil sector, so that it could facilitate foreign (US) investments. Venezuela has the largest proven oil reserves, constituting approximately 17 per cent of the global total.<sup>5</sup> The stated objective of eliminating the drug and refugee problems emanating from Venezuela was soon overshadowed by the real calculations and strategies of developing oil fields in the country by US companies with a planned investment of US\$ 100 billion over time.<sup>6</sup> The military threat over Venezuela, however, lingers to the degree of the Venezuelan regime’s non-cooperation with the US.<sup>7</sup>

## The Bogeyman of Imminent Threat in Iran

Within a couple of months of the Venezuela action, the US, along with Israel, attacked Iran on 28 February 2026 and decapitated its leadership by killing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, along with other high-ranking politicians and military officers, in Operation Epic Fury. The stated objectives were “eliminating imminent threats from the Iranian regime” and to “ensure that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon”.<sup>8</sup> Obliterating the Iranian missile industry, annihilating their navy and disabling their regional proxies were a few other stated objectives.<sup>9</sup>

It must be noted that the claims of both the US and Israel after the 12-day war in June 2025 had ranged between “obliteration” of Iran’s nuclear bomb building capability and a “setback” in “Iran’s ability to develop nuclear weapons by many years”. The assessments claimed that it might take Iran many years to reconstitute the lost capability of enriching Uranium and build a weapon out of it.<sup>10</sup> The Israeli Prime Minister’s Office had also claimed, “The achievement can continue indefinitely if Iran does not get access to nuclear material”.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Joe Kent, Director,

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<sup>5</sup> [“Country Analysis Brief: Venezuela”](#), Energy Information Administration, United States of America, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Lauren Aratani, [“Trump Promises Oil Companies ‘Total Safety’ in Venezuela as He Urges Them To Invest Billions”](#), *The Guardian*, 9 January 2026.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Scherer, [“Trump Threatens Venezuela’s New Leader with A Fate Worse than Maduro’s”](#), *The Atlantic*, 4 January 2026.

<sup>8</sup> [“President Donald Trump’s Video Statement After the Attack on Iran”](#), *Truth Social*, 18 February 2026.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> [“Iran’s Nuclear Facilities Have Been Obliterated - And Suggestions Otherwise Are Fake News”](#), The White House, 25 June 2025.

<sup>11</sup> [“Statement by the Prime Minister’s Office on behalf of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission \(IAEC\)”](#), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, 25 June 2026.

National Counterterrorism Centre in the US, resigned, saying, “Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby”.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, a surprise attack on Iran only within a year, against assessments of the country not posing an immediate threat to the US, along with the targeted assassination of its highest leadership and administrators, reveals a calculated intention for regime change with strikes for which no immediate provocation by Iran was visible. President Trump called on the people of Iran to take over the regime, as this might be their chance that they have had in generations.

The range and nature of the targets selected at the beginning of the US–Israeli joint strikes were beyond what was required to eliminate Iran’s nuclear capability, which was allegedly achieved in June 2025 itself. Therefore, the US's emphasis on the nuclear dimension as justification for the attacks seemed more like a bogeyman. At the same time, the real objectives were different and linked to the long-term Trumpian grand strategy to be achieved through regime change in Iran. President Trump, known for his transactionalism, is spending billions of dollars on military adventures in Iran. Hence, the question is what motivated him to go to this war.

## Did Israel Pull Trump into the War?

It is speculated that President Trump was led into the war by Israel. Israel’s objectives and motivations for the strikes can be understood in light of its antagonistic relationship with the country. Israel had been looking for an opportunity to bring the US on board with its designs to eliminate the Iranian regime, and Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel succeeded with President Trump this time. But the question again is why Israel could convince Trump.

Given his inclinations and transactional temperament, President Trump should not join a war without concrete business incentives. His real motivations in this war, however, are less understood and quite obfuscated. Differences of opinion have also appeared within the Make America Great Again (MAGA) leadership about the ways of the movement that thrust him to power. There is a divide within, and Trump, with his adventures in Venezuela and Iran, stands for his own faction. His war on Iran has received credible backing by the Republican Party supporters,<sup>13</sup> anointing

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<sup>12</sup> [“As Fire and Fury Hit MAGA Tent, Vance Walks the Tightrope for 2028”](#), *The Hindu*, 18 March 2026.

<sup>13</sup> Anthony Zurcher, [“Iran War Splits Older And Younger Conservatives - As Pressure Builds For Trump To Find Exit Ramp”](#), *BBC News*, 28 March 2026; [“US Senate Republicans Reject Efforts to Halt Trump’s Iran War”](#), *The Times of India*, 16 April 2026.

his actions as the legitimate MAGA approach. Therefore, to understand his motivations and adventures, we must look into his policy and strategic outlook.

President Trump, in his address after the strikes, mentioned every long-term threat posed by Iran to the US interests in the region, but left out one aspect, i.e. oil. The US has historically had an interest in Iranian oil, but the aspirations to get hold of the source were jeopardised by the Iranian Islamist Revolution in 1979.<sup>14</sup> The Israeli objective of regime change or weakening Iran to a point of no return was deemed as a chance that converged with President Trump’s long-term strategic goals, hinged on an oil vision.

Trump’s approach, discernible in the National Security Strategy 2025, introduces oil as a correlating variable to be discussed in relation to his global strategic adventures, leading to military actions that began in Venezuela.<sup>15</sup> In 2023, Iran accounted for 12 per cent of the global oil reserves and 24 per cent of the Middle East.<sup>16</sup> The two countries that President Trump has targeted for military operations to date, along with the US, account for about one-third of global oil reserves. President Trump’s eagerness to end the war and expression of desire to control Kharg Island and the Iranian oil amidst the conflict alludes towards the original motive of controlling the Iranian oil with a brief blitzkrieg of air power, eliminating its leadership. No other economic factor explains President Trump's allowing himself to be led into this expensive war.

As there was no immediate provocation by Iran, the US stated objectives appeared to align with Israeli objectives at the outset. However, as the conflict unfolded and the US (especially Trump) considered ending it even without the Strait of Hormuz reopening to normal operations, this revealed the US's eagerness to get out of the expensive quagmire it had fallen into.<sup>17</sup> This also exposed the difference in goals between the two partners, despite their shared means of regime change. Israel’s motivation for the attack was a shift in the regional strategic balance and long-term security through regime change and weakening of Iran, and this could provide President Trump access to Iranian oil. A Venezuela-like cooperation from the Iranian leadership post the initial strikes appears to have been expected, but the dynamics of the conflict have set back US expectations.

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<sup>14</sup> [“Statement of Policy by the National Security Council \(NSC 5402\)”](#), Office of the Historian, Washington, USA, 2 January 1954.

<sup>15</sup> National Security Strategy 2025, pp. 5, 14, and 28.

<sup>16</sup> [“Country Analysis Brief: Venezuela”](#), no. 5, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Alexander Ward and Meridith McGraw, [“Trump Tells Aides He’s Willing to End War without Reopening Hormuz”](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 March 2026.

## The Centrality of Crude Oil in Trump’s Domestic and Global Strategy

President Trump started his second term with the slogan “drill baby drill”.<sup>18</sup> He concluded that producing more oil would help grow the US economy faster and secure its future hegemony.<sup>19</sup> His pursuit of foreign oil resources is also important to study, as President Trump himself has highlighted that the US is a net energy exporter and does not need foreign oil as it did in the past.<sup>20</sup> It is noteworthy that within a month of the inauguration of his second stint, President Trump signed an executive order stating his administration's policy of “making America energy dominant”.<sup>21</sup> To this end, the order established the National Energy Dominance Council (NEDC) under the Executive Office of the President.<sup>22</sup>

Now, the question is: why does the US need this Council to dominate energy if the country has a surplus, and who is supposed to be dominated? The executive order, however, did not explicitly mention any other country or region to be dominated; and instead focused on planning from a “long-term” energy perspective towards increasing production of “reliable energy”. For this, the Trump administration prioritises oil drilling over green policies favouring renewables as he has reversed policies that supported and promoted electric vehicles.<sup>23</sup> The Endangered Species Committee in the US has also recently cleared oil and gas drilling in the Gulf of Mexico, exempting it from environmental rules, a move that could threaten a rare whale species and other marine life.<sup>24</sup> The Trumpian economic strategy clearly hinges on access to cheap oil.

## Why the Threat to ‘Take Over’ Cuba?

After Venezuela and Iran, which are oil-rich countries, Cuba is a curious case that has not been in global news for its oil reserves. The island, home to around 10.9 million people, located only 90 miles off the southern US state of Florida, is associated with President Fidel Castro, its communist revolution, and its very close relationship with the Soviet Union (USSR) despite being a ‘non-aligned’ country

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<sup>18</sup> [“President Donald Trump’s Inaugural Address”](#), The White House, 25 January 2026.

<sup>19</sup> National Security Strategy 2025, p. 14.

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Dale, [“Fact Check: Despite Claims Of Trump-Era ‘Energy Independence,’ The US Never Stopped Importing Foreign Oil”](#), *CNN*, 15 March 2022.

<sup>21</sup> [“Establishing the National Energy Dominance Council”](#), The White House, 14 February 2025.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Jeremy M. Michalek, [“Trump Reversed Policies Supporting Electric Vehicles – It Will Affect The Road To Clean Electricity, Too”](#), *The Conversation*, 8 September 2025.

<sup>24</sup> [“Trump’s Endangered Species Committee Exempts Oil And Gas Drilling In The Gulf From Rules”](#), *PBS News*, 31 March 2026.

during the Cold War. Cuba was governed by the Castro family under the banner of the Communist Party of Cuba, with single-party rule from 1959 to 2018. And, since then, it has been ruled by President Miguel Díaz-Canel under the same system.

Cuba is known for its famous cigars, sugar production (once among the highest globally but currently at record-low levels and negligible on a global scale), world-class rum, and pristine beaches, but not for oil. It is also recorded in modern history and international relations for the infamous Cuban Missile Crisis, which took the world to the brink of nuclear war in October 1962. The US had blockaded the country during the Crisis, and it has been under a strict US sanctions regime since then. The end of the Cold War, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the weakening and reinvention of Russia as a successor state and polity, reduced Cuba's strategic importance in global geopolitics. The state, however, remains a communist-run system with currently declining industrial and well-being indicators. It has ideological opposition to US policies, but cannot pose any military or political threat in the post-Cold War scenario.

Due to the historical baggage, Cuba keeps good relations with countries that oppose US hegemonic policies and its ambitions of unipolarity. Therefore, in the executive order signed on 29 January 2026, President Trump found Cuba's “policies, practices and actions” as constituting “an unusual and extraordinary threat” to the “national security and foreign policy of the United States”. The allegations are that Cuba has relations with “numerous hostile countries”, “terrorist groups”, and “malign actors hostile to the United States” that include Russia, China, Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah. Citing Cuba's relations with these actors and blaming it for having “Russia's largest overseas signals intelligence facility” and “deep intelligence and defence cooperation” with the People's Republic of China (PRC), the executive order links it with the US's notion of Western Hemisphere security and dominance.<sup>25</sup> The country, in fact, has been doing this for decades, but still cannot pose any real threat to the US.

A situation that was considered non-threatening and manageable with sanctions has now been categorised as a “national emergency”. The reasons for this shift are President Trump's ideological perspective and the resulting threat perception, which makes him sensitive to anything linked to China in the American neighbourhood. Trump has concluded that he needs to push back against the increasing Chinese reach and penetration into the economic and strategic sectors in Latin America, especially in countries ruled by left-leaning leaders. Venezuela and Cuba, from the US perspective, are seen as classic autocratic ideological opponents in the region. Brazil, Mexico and Colombia, too, have left-leaning leadership. Still, they are viewed

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<sup>25</sup> [“Addressing Threats to The United States by the Government of Cuba”](#), The White House, 29 January 2026.

as functional democracies and may be more difficult to handle due to their size, resources, political culture and international relations. Colombia is a case in which there is a left-leaning government for the first time in modern history, and the upcoming presidential elections may alter the current government. Power in these countries may change hands between the right and left, but Cuba is different. President Trump’s military threat to the country is not justified by any explicit economic reason. The reasons cited are strategic, and Cuba has also been designated as a “state sponsor of terrorism” for sheltering members of US-designated terror organisations.<sup>26</sup> It may be noted that Trump had similar allegations against Venezuela and Iran, which also have the common mineral resource factor of substantial oil reserves that could be turned into long-term energy and economic benefits for the US. Given the absence of a large oil industry, Cuba, at the surface, seems to be a different case altogether. But, with a further inquiry into the country’s crude oil potential, the perception changes.

### **Cuba as a Potential Petro Power in the Western Hemisphere**

Cuba currently has only 124 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, ranking it the 67<sup>th</sup> largest reserve holder.<sup>27</sup> The US and Cuban geological surveys estimate recoverable oil reserves between 4.6 and 20 billion barrels, respectively.<sup>28</sup> Various geological assessments of Cuba, especially its northern offshore Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) blocks, identify and acknowledge its potential to catapult itself among the top 20 largest proven oil reservoirs in the world and become a significant player in the oil economy of the Latin American Region. Even if the mean potential of the reserves is realised, only Venezuela and Canada would be able to surpass Cuba in terms of per capita oil reserves in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>29</sup> The estimates for the Cuban offshore fields are at least half the size of the US’s Alaskan oil reserves.<sup>30</sup>

Since the discovery of Cuba's oil potential in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the country has sought to reduce its energy dependence on Venezuela and Mexico amid the post-Cold War geopolitical landscape. Oil companies from Canada, China, Russia, Spain, Norway and India had shown interest and invested in Cuba's offshore exploration blocks, but nothing productive has come of it. Almost 80 per cent of the exploration

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<sup>26</sup> [“State Sponsors of Terrorism”](#), U.S. Department of State.

<sup>27</sup> [“Cuba Oil Summary Table”](#), *Worldometer*, 15 April 2025.

<sup>28</sup> H. Michael Erisman, “Cuba as a Hemispheric Petropower: Prospects and Consequences”, *International Journal of Cuban Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2019, pp. 43–44.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, “The Current Status and Future Prospects for Oil Exploration in Cuba: A Special Report for the Cuban Research Institute”, Florida International University, November 2006, p. 6.

area lies in deep or ultra-deep waters, and oil cannot be easily extracted with old technology.<sup>31</sup> The state-of-the-art exploration technology is owned and controlled by the US, which has imposed sanctions and a blockade against Cuba, making it difficult to drill due to technology and investment denial, and practically choking the country from becoming energy self-reliant.<sup>32</sup> The development of offshore oilfields over time could boost the Cuban economy and national prosperity, making Cuba a significant player in the region's petroindustry, although possibly at the cost of economic diversification.<sup>33</sup>

US companies in the agricultural and pharmaceutical sectors have been pressing, sometimes successfully, for relaxations or normalisation of relations with Cuba to gain better access to its lucrative business opportunities.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, US oil companies have also been, though unsuccessfully, lobbying the US Congress to permit them to bid for oil and gas exploration in Cuban Waters. With only a small fraction of the world's proven oil reserves open to foreign involvement,<sup>35</sup> they do not want to be left out of the race.<sup>36</sup> Former US President Barack Obama took steps to ease sanctions and build a normal relationship with the country. But, his efforts were thwarted by President Trump's reversal of his policy towards Cuba. President Trump not only reinstated stringent sanctions on Cuba but also choked its essential crude supplies responsible for more than 80 per cent of its electricity generation.<sup>37</sup>

Amidst the downplayed oil dimension in Venezuela and Iran adventures, President Trump's attention on Cuba as well as the US companies' interest in exploration of its oilfields converge at a point where the country needs to be opened up for exploration. President Obama took a few steps towards engagement, but President Trump has a different way of achieving his goals. The oil potential of Cuba fits into his long-term scheme of Making America Great Again (MAGA), for which dominating the global energy market, along with the geopolitics of the Western Hemisphere, is an important condition.

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<sup>31</sup> H. Michael Erisman, “Cuba as a Hemispheric Petropower: Prospects and Consequences”, no. 28, p. 48.

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, “The Current Status and Future Prospects for Oil Exploration in Cuba: A Special Report for the Cuban Research Institute”, no. 30, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> H. Michael Erisman, “Cuba as a Hemispheric Petropower: Prospects and Consequences”, no. 28, p. 50.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54–55.

<sup>35</sup> Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, “The Current Status and Future Prospects for Oil Exploration in Cuba: A Special Report for the Cuban Research Institute”, no. 30, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> H. Michael Erisman, “Cuba as a Hemispheric Petropower: Prospects and Consequences”, no. 28, p. 55.

<sup>37</sup> [“Where Does Cuba Get Its Electricity?”](#), International Energy Agency, 7 April 2026.

## **The Political Dimensions of a Cuban Energy Self-Reliance**

Industry experts do not expect any global disruption due to the availability of Cuban oil in future, and the realisation of the estimated potential may not impact the global prices in general. But, Cuba shall be energy self-reliant with the realisation of even the lower end of the estimates.<sup>38</sup> Further, the country's transition to being a net oil exporter will have a positive impact on its economy, leading to the failure of the long-term US sanctions policy against Cuba.<sup>39</sup> Hence, it is imperative from the US perspective to keep Cuba energy-starved until the geopolitical and economic positions of the two countries are aligned. The alignment is possible either with regime change in Cuba or a paradigm shift in the US policy to engage the country with its political system intact. President Obama's efforts to engage and relax sanctions on Cuba faced tough resistance, especially by migrant Cubans who have a grudge against the Communist regime.

President Trump, however, in the new geopolitical context of increasing influence of China and Russia in the Latin American Region, wants to decisively change the long-maintained status quo to benefit the US through regime change. His rhetoric on Cuba is explained by the convergence of his strategic visions of securing the Western Hemisphere for the US by driving China and Russia out, and of dominating the global energy market. As President Trump's actions in Cuba are being analysed more from strategic and high-level geopolitical perspectives rather than economic ones, the correlation with oil has received little attention from analysts, who focus only on the country's current proven reserves and production capacity.<sup>40</sup>

## **Trumpian Actions Have a Long-Term Economic Perspective on Oil**

The US military actions and objectives on Venezuela and Iran are being shaped from a long-term Trumpian economic and strategic perspective, and Cuba is no exception. The exploration and development of oil fields in these countries may take around a decade or more and require heavy investment. Cuba, with its oil potential, is also among the top global producers of Cobalt and Nickel (critical metals for electric vehicle battery production) that may be important to a futuristic US foreign policy. But, President Trump has already 'debunked' US policy supporting and promoting electric vehicles by prioritising oil and gas over green and renewable energy

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Sandels, “An Oil-Rich Cuba?”, *Monthly Review*, Vol. 63, No. 4, 2011, pp. 40–45.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Arnab Chakrabarty, “[Cuba - Cracks in the Red Citadel, and the US' Unfinished Geostrategic Dream](#)”, Indian Council of World Affairs, 7 April 2026.

sources.<sup>41</sup> Hence, oil has emerged as a clear priority in his calculations for engaging or targeting countries to achieve his strategic and foreign policy goals. In the context of Cuba, too, potential oil fields have to be given greater weight than renewables and critical minerals to understand the Trumpian economic and strategic calculus.

## Conclusion

The oil potential of Cuba would be an unsaid benefit for the US if the stated strategic objectives are achieved through regime change. US involvement in oil exploration and production in Cuba could be a viable option for the communist Cuban government as well, but it cannot happen without the US securing guarantees to protect its stated strategic interests in the country. President Trump had already indicated the possibility of a deal between the two countries without an invasion, referring to a takeover in “some form”. Any deal, however, would depend on the Cuban government's willingness to shed its ideological opposition to the US government. Apart from the US desire to detach Cuba from China, Russia and other unfriendly states in the region, oil exploration could be another lucrative potential benefit for the Trump Administration.

President Trump’s conflict with countries that posed no immediate or imminent military threat to the US should at least be explained by economic logic and motivation. Any conflict initiated for any reason ultimately has its economic endgame. And, as we examine here, oil fits in as the variable correlating to Trump’s aggression and military threat against Venezuela, Iran and Cuba. The presence of the correlation is further highlighted by President Trump’s statements and executive order regarding his energy policy. The US–Israel–Iran war has not yet concluded, and the outcomes may not be as the US expected, but oil could be a benefit in all the three. The endgames of the US aggression against Venezuela, Iran and Cuba may focus on long-term deals that include oil benefits.

The focus on the nuclear material issue might be more useful for legitimising the catastrophe unleashed. But, from the perspective of Trumpian MAGA priorities, the success, rationale, wisdom and the economics of these military adventures would remain highly questionable in the absence of any energy/oil deals.

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<sup>41</sup> Jeremy M. Michalek, “[Trump Reversed Policies Supporting Electric Vehicles – It Will Affect The Road To Clean Electricity, Too](#)”, no. 23.

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