



The American Century Passes Through Here: Venezuela as a Strategic Hub

Published on 05/01/2026

After the events of recent days, Venezuela today represents a concrete test for the strategic credibility of the United States in the Western Hemisphere: **energy, Caribbean routes, regional flows, and critical infrastructures** converge at a point geographically close to the USA. In this space, the structural presence of extra-hemispheric powers is not a diplomatic detail, but a national security factor that can redefine balances for decades.

In this perspective, the realistic goal is not to “control” Caracas or rebuild the country from the outside, but to **prevent Venezuela from becoming a stable platform for hostile projection**. This is where the Venezuelan dossier takes on general value: it measures how far Washington is willing (and able) to enforce a red line in the Western Hemisphere without falling into the typical mistake of great powers, that is, turning a strategic interest into an all-encompassing, costly, and delegitimizing intervention.

Hybrid Warfare and the American Weak Point: Managing the “After”

Contemporary competition is increasingly a **hybrid war**: cyber, disinformation, economic coercion, proxies, below-threshold operations, institutional sabotage. The **goal is not necessarily to conquer territories, but to erode states and alliances from within**, making instability chronic and the adversary's leadership more costly. If this process is not countered, the loss of control can mature in 30–40 years, without the need for a frontal clash.

The limit that has emerged in recent decades mainly concerns the **political phase following the conflict or crisis**. Many operations have produced tactical successes but have struggled to generate lasting stability due to deficiencies in governance, legitimacy, and institutional architectures. In a hybrid context, the “after” phase is not a subsequent chapter: it is the decisive part that determines whether military victory converts into order or resentment.

This leads to an operational rule: coercive tools (sanctions, pressures, deterrence) work only if integrated with **credible incentives** and **practicable exits**. Without a de-escalation ramp and without economic and institutional alternatives, target actors tend to strengthen ties with rival powers. Stabilization therefore requires a mix: internal security, anti-corruption, administrative reform, investments, and market access, with communication that takes care of perception beyond substance.

Architecture of the Century: Two Poles, Regional Powers, Unknowns Europe and Brazil

The most plausible scenario is an imperfect order based on **two global powers (USA and China)** and a series of **regional powers** (India, Russia, Turkey, others) with variable geometry alliances. In this framework, the Western Hemisphere represents the American red line: Chinese growth can be tolerated in various areas, but strategic settlement near U.S. territory becomes hardly acceptable.

In the Indo-Pacific, the containment ring of Chinese expansion rests on key allies and partners: **Japan and Australia** on the maritime side and **India** as the land pivot, with a belt of states that, to varying degrees, contribute to limiting expansion and diversifying value chains. With Russia, the dominant logic is downsizing and management: avoiding scale jumps in Europe,

maintaining deterrence, and at the same time tolerating a regional dimension as long as it does not overturn the European order.

The most delicate strategic unknowns remain **Europe and Brazil**. Brazil is the key to South America: the most effective path is not confrontation, but co-optation through a conditioned regional role, in exchange for clear limits to extra-hemispheric strategic penetration. Europe, due to its economic size and industrial-technological capacity, is the only space that could become a systemic competitor if developed unitarily: for Washington, it is essential to have strong European allies but to prevent the birth of an alternative unitary political-military pole. In this transition, **perception** is decisive: strength without legitimacy fuels reactions.

The concluding thesis is that another century of American dominance is possible and potentially stabilizing, but it requires one condition: transforming military superiority into **the ability to end conflicts, manage the “after” and make leadership sustainable through alliances, institutions, and visible results**. In an imperfect bipolar system, such an approach reduces the likelihood of world wars that, as things stand, do not benefit either of the two superpowers.