

1-18-1990

Brazil & Venezuela Announce Joint Operations Against Illegal Gold Mining Along Mutual Border

John Neagle

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur>

Recommended Citation

Neagle, John. "Brazil & Venezuela Announce Joint Operations Against Illegal Gold Mining Along Mutual Border." (1990).
<https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur/4217>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiSur by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.

Brazil & Venezuela Announce Joint Operations Against Illegal Gold Mining Along Mutual Border

by John Neagle

Category/Department: General

Published: Thursday, January 18, 1990

On Jan. 17, Venezuelan Deputy Foreign Minister Adolfo Tayhaldart told reporters that Caracas and the Brazilian government are planning joint operations against illegal gold mining along the two nations' border. Earlier, Tayhaldart met with Brazilian undersecretary for bilateral political affairs, Luis Felipe Lampreia. The two officials were scheduled on Jan. 18 to examine environmental damage in the border region caused by the gold-mining operations. Tayhaldart said he and Lampreia had established a preliminary accord to increase the number of border markers along their mutual frontier, and creation of a joint program using satellites to monitor the border for illegal mining operations and environmental damage. The Brazilian government also pledged to intensify official regulation of airports and landing strips and to relocate the gold miners further away from the border. Lampreia said the discovery of large gold deposits along the Venezuelan-Brazilian border had "caused an extraordinary human movement" into the region. He pointed out that in the Brazilian state of Roraima, some 45,000 people were engaged in gold prospecting. According to Lampreia, the population of Boa Vista, capital of Roraima, had grown from 30,000 to 180,000 in five years. Miners are extracting some 3,000 kg. of gold per month in the Boa Vista area. He added that some 345 planes and helicopters flew about 300 flights for gold miners every day on the Brazilian side of the mining region. An estimated 3,000 Brazilian miners have devastated about 230 ha. of jungle in southern Venezuela and have contaminated the head waters of the Orinoco River with mercury used in mining operations. The gold miners were first detected in Venezuela in April 1989 by a film crew shooting a documentary along the Orinoco. Although they were forcibly removed by Venezuelan security forces, the Brazilian miners later returned to the region. (Basic data from AFP, 01/17/90)

-- End --