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Milei Faces Uproar as U.S. Troops Enter Tierra del Fuego Without Congressional Approval

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The government authorized, by emergency decree (DNU), joint military exercises with the United States in Tierra del Fuego. Operation Trident will run across three naval bases. Critics say the decree sidesteps Congress and violates the Constitution. The move fuels geopolitical controversy and is linked to financial talks with Washington. Chile will also host U.S. troops.



Milei deploys U.S. troops in Argentina's south via decree branded unconstitutional



The government of President Javier Milei formalized, through Emergency and Necessity Decree (DNU) 697/2025 published in the Official Gazette, the arrival of U.S. military personnel on Argentine soil. The measure, signed by the president and his entire cabinet, authorizes two joint drills under the Armed Forces' Annual Combined Exercise Plan, according to the official text.

The first operation, dubbed “Solidarity,” will take place October 6–10 in Puerto Varas, Chile, and will focus on disaster-response cooperation under a 1997 bilateral agreement. The DNU authorizes the deployment of Argentine personnel and assets from October 5 to 11, as set out in the decree published Monday.

The second exercise, called “Trident,” will be conducted in Argentina between October 20 and November 15, centered on the naval bases of Mar del Plata, Ushuaia, and Puerto Belgrano. According to [BBC Mundo](#), the document states that the goal is to “improve interoperability and strengthen national capabilities in crisis scenarios,” and it will include combined naval defense and humanitarian assistance operations with the direct participation of U.S. troops.

The move has stirred controversy because, as [BBC Mundo](#) reports, it was adopted “without the endorsement of the National Congress.” [Página 12](#) echoes that criticism, arguing the decree “violates the Constitution and current laws, which require parliamentary approval for the entry and exit of troops.” Both outlets highlight the use of an administrative instrument for a decision that, by law, requires legislative authorization.

The political backdrop also looms large. [Página 12](#) **links the decision to “negotiations with the U.S. Treasury”** and an attempt by the government to “beg for a financial bailout,” noting the measure “raised suspicions.” The outlet also cites strong opposition from Tierra del Fuego Governor Gustavo Melella, who warned: “We continue handing over sovereignty to the United States, a strategic partner of Great Britain.”

Officials note that both maneuvers were included in a draft bill submitted to the National Congress, but lawmakers never took it up. That delay prompted the DNU to keep the exercises on schedule, igniting a heated debate between the Armed Forces' operational needs and constitutional procedure.

