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Week’s Headlines

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OFAC Issues General License 52C: Blocked PDVSA Officers May Sign Contracts, and No Transaction May Alter CITGO's Governance

On September 14, 2026 OFAC issued General License 52C, "Authorizing Certain Transactions Involving Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A.," which replaces General License 52B of August 27 in its entirety, and amended FAQ 1245. The core authorization keeps its form: an established U.S. entity — one organized in the United States on or before January 29, 2025 — may transact with PDVSA and entities it owns 50% or more, provided contract disputes are heard in the United States, the United Kingdom, France or Singapore and non-tax payments to a blocked person go into the Foreign Government Deposit Funds.

Two paragraphs bear directly on counterparties. **Paragraph (c)** authorizes individuals who are themselves blocked to execute and sign contracts, solely in their official capacity as officers, employees or authorized representatives of PDVSA or its entities, to effectuate authorized transactions. **Paragraph (d)(9)** excludes any transaction to affect or alter the governance of PDV Holding, CITGO Holding or CITGO Petroleum, including the appointment, removal or replacement of any director, officer or other corporate-governance official. The exclusions for the 2020-bond collateral, for settling bonds and debt, and for enforcing judgments against blocked property are unchanged. The Rio Times reports both paragraphs as new against 52B; the text of 52B was not re-read clause by clause at this pass, so that comparison is carried on its account.

The OFAC Recent Actions index, read on September 15, carried no later entry; on September 16 OFAC issued General License 5Z, moving the 2020-bond collateral date to November 5, 2026 (Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — OFAC Issues General License 5Z, Moving the PDVSA 2020 Bond Collateral Date to November 5, 2026). Sources: OFAC · The Rio Times

OFAC Issues General License 5Z, Moving the PDVSA 2020 Bond Collateral Date to November 5, 2026

On September 16, 2026, the day before General License 5Y's date fell due, OFAC issued General License 5Z, "Authorizing Certain Transactions Related to the Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. 2020 8.5 Percent Bond on or After November 5, 2026," and amended FAQ 595. Paragraph (a) authorizes all transactions related to the bond on or after **November 5, 2026**; paragraph (b) authorizes nothing else the Venezuela Sanctions Regulations prohibit; paragraph (c) replaces General License 5Y of August 3 in its entirety, effective September 16. The licence, signed by OFAC Director Bradley T. Smith, was read on OFAC's site.

The mechanism is unchanged. The licence prohibits nothing; it postpones an authorization, so dealings in the bond — in practice any step by a U.S. person to enforce the pledge over the 50.1% of CITGO Holding shares securing it — remain unauthorized absent a specific license until the new date, forty-nine days on from the old one. Every licence in the series since 2019 has moved the date rather than let it arrive. The new date falls after the October 2026 appellate hearing on the Delaware sale. The FAQ 595 page reached at this pass still displayed its August 3 text, so the amendment is not described. The same action removed three persons from the SDN list, none of them Venezuelan. **Milestone watch — November 5, 2026:** the General License

5Z authorization date (Priority Transition Actions — CITGO Board Restructuring, U.S. Treasury Clearance & the $4.5B; Sanctions Architecture — Active OFAC General License Inventory). Sources: OFAC

CITGO Became the Second-Largest U.S. Buyer of Venezuelan Crude in June, EIA Company Data Show

CITGO Petroleum received **109,300 b/d** of Venezuelan crude in **June 2026**, making it the second-largest U.S. refiner of Venezuelan oil after Valero Energy, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration company-level import data reported on September 18 by Bitácora Económica and Confirmado. The June volume was the fourth consecutive monthly rise since CITGO resumed direct purchases in March — 16,000 b/d in March, 49,000 in April and 80,000 in May. On those accounts CITGO took about 15% of the 721,000 b/d of Venezuelan crude shipped to the United States in June, the highest monthly volume in nine years, while its purchases of Colombian crude under the 2019 Ecopetrol arrangement fell to zero.

Miranda Institute finding: the figures are June data, published with the EIA's usual lag; what is new is the company-level ranking, not the resumption, which Reuters reported on September 9 (Sectoral Profile — CITGO & the Dragon Gas Precedent). A separate EIA weekly series, as carried by Cactus24, puts Venezuelan crude arriving in the United States at 782,000 b/d in the week ended September 11, the highest weekly figure since August 2017; the weekly and monthly series measure different things and are not blended. Bitácora Económica reports that the purchases are paid into a U.S. Treasury account under the General License 52 series, the routing set out in the Sanctions Architecture (Executive-Order Foundation). None of these volumes enters the indicator table (Priority Transition Actions — CITGO Board Restructuring, U.S. Treasury Clearance & the $4.5B). Sources: EIA (as reported by Bitácora Económica, Confirmado and Cactus24)

Guri Loses at Least 1,200 MW After Unit 17 Fails, El Pitazo Reports, With a Second Unit Stopped on September 10

El Pitazo reported on September 14, 2026, from Corpoelec reports it says were reviewed by the generation engineer José Aguilar, that **unit 17** of Guri's second powerhouse — a 770 MW turbine — made an emergency mechanical stop on **August 29** after partial detachment of the runner's lower fixed wear ring. The 1,200 MW figure is the unit and its knock-on together: with less water turbined at Guri, the downstream Caruachi and Macagua plants run limited, and Aguilar estimates a further ≈430 MW lost. He puts rehabilitation at two years at least, because a new runner must be built. **Unit 15** (730 MW, already limited to 580 MW) made an emergency stop on **September 10** over runner-blade damage, and an emergency repair is planned.

On El Pitazo's account Guri's two powerhouses generate 6,141 MW of 10,350 MW installed, with 7 of its 20 units unavailable. The electricity ministry reported a record demand peak of **16,030 MW** on September 18, attributed it to high temperatures and asked users to switch off equipment not in use; it gave no generation or reserve figures. On Radio Fe y Alegría, as carried by El Nacional, the engineer Roberto Vernet put the operational deficit at about **3,900 MW**, with thermal generation at 2,800 MW. The first is a demand figure and the second an engineer's estimate; no Corpoelec statement on either unit was reached, and none of these figures is the capacity series charted (Sectoral Profile — Electricity, **Guri units**). Sources: El Pitazo · El Venezolano News · Ministry of Electric Energy (via La Patilla) · El Nacional

Used U.S. Oilfield Equipment Is Shipping to Maracaibo and Guanta, Reuters Reports

Reuters reported on September 14, 2026 that pre-owned and auctioned U.S. oilfield equipment has been moving to Venezuela since the January 3 operation. **Guanta Express**, a shipping intermediary with a yard in

Humble, Texas, sends cargo to the ports of Guanta and Maracaibo; containers of workover rigs it shipped were unloaded in Maracaibo the previous week, according to photographs Reuters saw, and its president Greg Diaz said the company expects to run at full capacity to year-end, with two 1,500-horsepower rigs — the largest it has sent — due in its next two shipments. Houston-based **PetroFarm**, which buys directly from U.S. owners and operators, has shipped two smaller workover rigs and plans three more; its chief executive Jorge Aponte put a small workover rig at around US$350,000. Further energy cargoes are expected at Guaranao, on a terminal source.

The report records the industry's concern over the reliability of used and auctioned equipment, which often carries thousands of operating hours and no warranty. PDVSA and the oil ministry did not respond to Reuters. Reuters puts current output near 1.25 mb/d; the dashboard charts OPEC secondary sources at 1.145 mb/d for August, a different series, and the Reuters figure is not charted (Sectoral Profile — Oil & Gas, **Used equipment**). Sources: Reuters (via Investing.com and BOE Report)

Continental Resources Signs a Memorandum With PDVSA to Operate the Ayacucho 2 Block in the Orinoco Belt

On September 16, 2026, at the G20 energy ministerial in Houston, Continental Resources — the Oklahoma City producer founded by Harold Hamm — signed a memorandum of understanding with PDVSA to operate and develop the **Ayacucho 2** block in the Orinoco Belt, Anzoátegui state, its first entry into Venezuela. The block covers about 126,000 acres and, on the company's estimate, holds some 30 billion barrels of oil in place; Continental would hold a 100% working interest, and the parties intend to convert the memorandum into a Productive Participation Contract (*Contrato de Participación Productiva*) in the coming weeks. Chief executive Doug Lawler called Ayacucho 2 "one of the most significant resource opportunities" in the company's nearly 60-year history. Energy Secretary Chris Wright had said earlier in the day, Reuters reported, that a U.S. producer would announce a major investment.

The memorandum is non-binding. No investment amount, production target or well count has been published, and 30 billion barrels in place is a resource estimate, not a reserve and not a print. No OFAC authorization is named in the accounts reached (Sectoral Profile — Oil & Gas, **Houston round**). Sources: Reuters (via Investing.com) · World Oil · OilPrice.com

ExxonMobil Is in Talks to Return to Venezuela's Orinoco Belt, Reuters and Bloomberg Report

ExxonMobil is negotiating a return to Venezuela's Orinoco Belt. *The Wall Street Journal* reported on September 16, 2026 that the company is **nearing a deal** to invest in Venezuelan oil fields, and Semafor reports that it would partner with PDVSA; the Journal's piece is carried on the accounts of the outlets that report it. The fields are not settled across the sources and both accounts are carried: Reuters names the **Petromonagas** heavy-oil project — the former Cerro Negro, in which Exxon held 41.67% until nationalization — and areas of the neighbouring Carabobo block; Bloomberg, which places senior executives in Caracas on **September 15**, names four fields, **Petrovictoria**, Petromonagas and two in the **Carabobo** area. Chief executive **Darren Woods**, who had previously called the country uninvestable, said the company's heavy-oil work from Canada's oil sands "positions us uniquely in terms of low-cost production of the Venezuelan resources"; Bloomberg's account records long delays in communication, the capital a start from no operations would take, and uncertainty over whether the policy outlasts the current administration.

Russia's Roszarubezhneft holds 40% of Petromonagas, transferred from Rosneft in 2020, and Reuters says how that ownership would affect a deal is unclear; Russian-linked counterparties are excluded under the standing general-licence conditions (Sanctions Architecture — How Sanctions & GLs Interact). The Journal puts the fields under discussion at **more than 50 billion barrels** — a geological resource estimate, not booked reserves and not a production figure — and the **65 billion barrels** announced by the President on August 28 is a different claim about a different thing; the two do not reconcile and are not blended here. Exxon has not commented and no agreement has been announced (Sectoral Profile — Oil & Gas, **Houston round**). Sources: Reuters (via 93.3 The Drive) · Bloomberg (via Investing.com and Transport Topics) · *The Wall Street Journal* (via BOE Report, EnergyNow and Semafor)

TotalEnergies Signs an Energy-Cooperation Memorandum With PDVSA, Five Years After Leaving Venezuela

On Saturday, September 19, 2026, at Miraflores Palace, PDVSA president Héctor Obregón and Francisco Javier Rielo, TotalEnergies' senior vice president for the Americas, signed a memorandum of understanding on energy cooperation, with the acting President Delcy Rodríguez presiding. The company's signatory is **TotalEnergies E&P New Ventures**, which, Bloomberg reports, will participate in energy projects under the agreement. No project, block, area, amount or timetable has been disclosed on any account reached, and Infobae states that nothing has been published on the memorandum's operational, financial or contractual scope. The acting President said the partnerships strengthen hydrocarbon production and tied new investment to the Organic Hydrocarbons Law as reformed this year.

A memorandum confers no operating right: like Continental Resources' Ayacucho 2 memorandum of September 16, it would have to be converted into a Productive Participation Contract (*Contrato de Participación Productiva*). TotalEnergies left Venezuela in 2021, exiting the Petrocedeño extra-heavy-oil project alongside Equinor and divesting its majority stake in the gas company YPergas; chief executive Patrick Pouyanné attributed the exit, Bloomberg reports, to the company's plan to reduce its carbon footprint. **Miranda Institute finding:** TotalEnergies is not a U.S. person and no general or specific licence names it; whether any U.S. nexus in its participation would require an authorization is not addressed on any account reached (Sectoral Profile — Oil & Gas, **Houston round**). Sources: Bloomberg (via Investing.com) · Anadolu Agency · The National · Infobae

Former Chevron Venezuela Chief Ali Moshiri Says PDVSA Is Stalling His US$2 Billion Investment Plans, Bloomberg Reports

Bloomberg reported on September 18, 2026 that **Ali Moshiri**, who ran Chevron's Venezuela operations and now leads the investment fund **Amos Global Energy**, has raised about US$2 billion from roughly 15 investors for Venezuelan oil projects, but that PDVSA has been slow to respond to his proposals. "There is no process, nor any sense of urgency," he told Bloomberg. On the accounts reached, the plan targets seven oil fields with a combined goal of about 200,000 b/d, a renovation of the José Antonio Anzoátegui petrochemical complex of up to US$1 billion, and export-port upgrades; Amos has signed a memorandum of understanding on one of the seven fields, and Moshiri said he planned to travel to Caracas to meet PDVSA executives. PDVSA and the oil and information ministries did not respond to Bloomberg's inquiries.

The 200,000 b/d and the US$1 billion are the investor's own targets, not prints, and enter no table. No contract beyond the one memorandum, and no licence naming Amos Global Energy, has published (Priority Transition Actions — Brownfield Oil Opportunities). The Bloomberg piece was not reached directly and is carried on the accounts of the outlets that reproduced it. Sources: Bloomberg (via Azernews and Newsy Today)

Venezuela's Hydrocarbons Minister and PDVSA's Vice President Attend the G20 Energy Ministerial in Houston as Guests

A Venezuelan delegation is attending the G20 energy ministerial in Houston, which opened on September 14, 2026 and runs through September 16, at the invitation of the U.S. administration. Bloomberg reported, citing a White House official, that the delegation — the hydrocarbons minister **Paula Henao** and PDVSA executive vice-president **Jovanny Martínez** — will not sit in the formal closed-door ministerial sessions but will attend bilateral meetings, side events and industry discussions, and that a Russian delegation is also attending. Venezuela is not a G20 member. Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, who co-chairs the meeting with Energy Secretary Chris Wright, told Fox Business, AFP reported, that the aim is to move the geopolitical centre of oil from the Middle East to the Western Hemisphere. No bilateral meeting, agreement or counterparty involving the delegation had been announced in the accounts reached at this pass. Sources: Bloomberg (via World Oil) · AFP (via France 24)

Colombia's Vice President Says Venezuelan Gas Through the Antonio Ricaurte Pipeline Is on the Bilateral Agenda With Washington

Colombia's Vice President **José Manuel Restrepo** told the congress of the generators' association Acolgen on September 17, 2026 that importing Venezuelan gas through the **Antonio Ricaurte** pipeline, which runs from Zulia to La Guajira, is among the energy issues on Colombia's bilateral agenda with the United States. He gave no timetable, volume or price. The accounts reached record no treaty, draft instrument or negotiating date with Venezuela, and his call to sign new exploration contracts concerned Colombia's own acreage rather than Venezuelan projects.

Miranda Institute finding: the substance predates the report. Ecopetrol and PDVSA agreed on March 11, 2026 on a roadmap to repair a damaged section of the ≈225 km line, whose capacity is put at about 500 million cubic feet a day, and Colombian ministers have said since February that imports would need U.S. authorization. What the September remarks add is that the question is carried by the government of President Abelardo de la Espriella and placed in its dealings with Washington. No OFAC authorization for the gas trade has published (Sectoral Profile — Oil & Gas, **Colombia gas**). Sources: Semana · Valora Analitik · Seguimiento.co · Reuters (via Yahoo News) · Xinhua · Infobae

Heeney Capital Signs a 30-Year Gold Agreement in El Callao, and Venalum Aluminum Is Due to Ship to the United States

At the Houston ministerial on September 16, 2026, New York-based Heeney Capital announced a gold mining agreement with the Republic and the *Corporación Venezolana de Minería* (CVM, the state mining corporation) to develop a project in the El Callao district of Bolívar, which it says would catalyse up to US$1 billion of investment; mining minister Héctor Silva is quoted in its release. Bloomberg and Reuters identify the asset as the **Choco** mine — Choco 10, on Bloomberg's account a private mine taken by the state more than a decade ago — and report a 30-year term, export rights over the gold and Mercuria Energy Group as Heeney's partner; Bloomberg says the output is to be brought to the United States.

Bloomberg also reports that about **15,000 tonnes** of aluminum from the state smelter Venalum, worth roughly US$50 million at current prices, are due to sail for the United States on September 18 under the Mercuria–Heeney arrangements, the first such shipment in years. No production target, royalty rate or instrument text has published, and the US$1 billion is a stated commitment, not a disbursement. No general or specific licence names Heeney, Mercuria, CVM or Venalum in OFAC's record (Sectoral Profile — Mining, Steel, Aluminum & Coal). Sources: Heeney Capital (via Mining Stock Education) · Bloomberg (via MINING.COM) · Reuters (via Cactus24)

Military Overflights Halt CVG Bauxilum's Bauxite Operation at Los Pijiguaos, in Guerrilla-Contested Western Bolívar

Military aircraft flew over **Los Pijiguaos**, in Cedeño municipality in the west of Bolívar state, on **September 16, 2026**, and the state bauxite producer **CVG Bauxilum** shut its mine and installations. El Pitazo reports, from residents and an unnamed company employee, that the *Pie de Cerro* rail hub stopped, that dock access for loading bauxite was restricted, and that an ambulance toured the company camp by megaphone telling people to stay indoors; the camp houses about **543 families**. Infobae reports that the army took control of the installation and the mining areas and that personnel were evacuated. No CVG, FANB or government statement appears in any account reached, and no detention, casualty or seizure is reported.

The area is contested by the **ELN** and **FARC dissidents**, and the pressure on the deposit is documented through August: drone surveillance of the mining population on August 3, partial paralysis of the Bauxilum camp under ELN harassment on August 5, and the kidnapping of two young men near the deposit on August 26, each reported by La Patilla. Américo De Grazia, a former opposition deputy for the state, says the territory is under ELN control. Provea has recorded attacks on indigenous leaders in the same municipality, including the killing of the Mapoyo captain Julio Rodríguez about a month ago.

Miranda Institute finding: this is a **bauxite** operation in the west of Bolívar, not the gold districts of the Arco Minero del Orinoco at Sifontes and El Callao where the FANB's June 9 operation ran; nothing in the accounts reached describes an engagement, and what is verified is an overflight and a shutdown (Priority Transition Actions — Security in Arco Minero — Removal of Illegal Armed Groups; Sectoral Profile — Mining, Steel, Aluminum & Coal). Sources: El Pitazo · Infobae · Confirmado · La Patilla

The BCV Makes All Bank Deposits Interest-Bearing From September 15, With a 10% Floor on Demand Accounts

The BCV announced that from **September 15, 2026** every bank deposit in bolívars earns interest, current accounts included. Demand deposits carry a minimum annual rate of **10%**, calculated on the daily balance; the minimum on savings deposits rises from 32% to **42%** and on time deposits from 36% to **46%**, and banks may pay above the floors. In the communiqué as carried by Aporrea, the BCV puts demand deposits at 93% of the funds the banking system takes in, and notes they have historically earned little or nothing. The stated purpose is to make interest rates an active instrument of monetary policy and to encourage individuals and companies to hold more of their balances in bolívars.

Descifrado, reporting the underlying Resolution No. 26-08-01, adds revised commission schedules from the same date — among them a 5% fee on cash withdrawals at another bank's ATM and 3% at a bank's own — and the requirement that new commercial loans, microcredits and the *Cartera Productiva Única Nacional* (the mandated productive-lending portfolio) be expressed in *Unidades de Valor de Crédito* (credit value units), the productive portfolio at 12% a year on the UVC balance. For comparison with the master's own series, interannual inflation printed at 534.21% in August. The measure takes effect in September and is read in the October Monthly Analysis (Sectoral Profile — Telecom, Banking, Industrial Services & Agriculture, **Deposit rates**). Sources: ACN · RNV · Aporrea · Descifrado

The Financial Times Reports Venezuela and the Opposition Are Near a Deal to Move US$4 Billion of Gold From London to New York

The *Financial Times* reported on September 18, 2026, citing four people familiar with the discussions, that the government and the opposition are close to an agreement to move the ≈31 tonnes of Venezuelan monetary gold held at the Bank of England — about US$4 billion at current prices — to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. On the terms described, the acting government of Delcy Rodríguez would gain legal control of the metal but could not sell it immediately; it could instead be pledged as collateral for government borrowing, including for reconstruction after the June earthquakes. An opposition figure quoted by the paper said the gold would go to the United States but that access would be supervised and restricted. Reuters carried the report and said it could not verify it.

Two institutional positions are on the record and neither has moved. The Bank of England told Reuters it is not in a position to act until a further order of the UK court determines who holds legal authority over the account, and that the parties must approach the court; the Foreign Office said the British government is not a party to that case. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York did not respond to Reuters. **Miranda Institute finding:** no instrument, court filing or official confirmation from either side has published on any account reached at this pass, and the destination itself is not settled on the record — the *Financial Times* describes the New York Fed, while The Rio Times describes a specialised United States Treasury account with external audits; both are carried and neither is reconciled. ft.com is not reachable to this bulletin and the report is carried in syndication (Priority Transition Actions — Gold Reserve Recovery (UK) — the Bank of England Bars). Sources: Reuters (via Investing.com and 93.3 The Drive), reporting the *Financial Times* · The Rio Times

The Public-Assets Commission Is Weighing Auctions of Non-Strategic State Enterprises Through the Caracas Stock Exchange

Luigi Pisella, who sits on the Special Commission for the Evaluation and Classification of Public Assets (*Comisión Especial para la Evaluación y Clasificación de Activos Públicos*), said the commission is evaluating the privatization of non-strategic state assets by auction through the **Bolsa de Valores de Caracas**, on the model of earlier telecommunications-sector sales, Bitácora Económica reported on **September 17, 2026**. He put the purpose as giving the process "transparency and sustainability over time with the governments that come", and said he had taken it to Vice President **Delcy Rodríguez** and to sectoral vice-president **Calixto Ortega Sánchez**. The same account says the commission also wants to accelerate the return of assets to former owners where expropriation proceedings were never completed, and that oil is excepted, the January 2026 hydrocarbons reform allowing direct contracts without legislative approval.

Miranda Institute finding: the exchange route is not itself new. Pisella set out the same three-way classification — strategic, operating non-strategic, non-operating — in a Unión Radio interview on **June 4, 2026**, saying non-operating public companies would be liquidated by auction or on the BVC. What the September account adds is the level at which the question is now being handled. No enterprise has been named, no valuation published, no auction calendar set, and no instrument constituting the commission has been reached.

Miranda Institute read: for a counterparty the order matters more than the mechanism. An auction route that opens before a claims register closes puts the same asset on two tracks at once — sale and restitution — which is the sequencing the freeze proposed at Property Restitution & Expropriation Compensation 1.0 is written against (Priority Transition Actions — State-Owned & Seized Enterprises; the Privatization Schedule). Sources: Bitácora Económica · El Estímulo

A Joint Needs Assessment Puts Venezuela's Earthquake Recovery at Up to US$21 Billion

On September 15, 2026, at Miraflores, the UNDP's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean, Michelle Muschett, handed acting President Delcy Rodríguez the first report of the post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) of the June 24 earthquakes, led by the government with the UNDP, the European Union, the World Bank, the IDB and CAF. It puts damage and losses across seven states at **US$14.831 billion** and recovery needs — reconstruction, resilience and risk reduction — at **up to US$21 billion**. The two measure different things: what was destroyed or disrupted, and what rebuilding would take. Muschett called it a first report and an input to an evidence-based recovery framework.

The World Bank's rapid estimate of July 23, made by remote sensing, had put direct physical damage alone at US$19.6 billion, 47% of it residential; the methods and scope differ and the figures are carried side by side, not reconciled. The same reporting counts 14,239 homes moderately and 11,001 severely damaged as of August 24, and more than 6,500 dead; Infobae adds that 528 homes were delivered a week earlier. The housing counts do not reconcile with the ≈100,000 units destroyed carried at Priority Transition Actions — Earthquake Recovery & Housing Reconstruction. Sources: EFE (via Diario Libre) · Infobae · World Bank

The Reform of the Ley Orgánica del TSJ Is Published in the Gaceta Oficial, Opening the Path to Naming New Magistrates

The **Ley Orgánica de Reforma Parcial de la Ley Orgánica del Tribunal Supremo de Justicia** (partial reform of the Organic Law of the Supreme Tribunal) was published in **Gaceta Oficial Extraordinaria N.º 7.074**, dated Tuesday September 15, 2026, and entered into force on publication. The National Assembly sanctioned it on September 1 and it was promulgated on September 15; the gazette itself circulated on September 17 and 18.

The reform rewrites Article 65. The *Comité de Postulaciones Judiciales* (judicial nominations committee) is enlarged to 23 members — 11 deputies and 12 nominated by sectors of society — designated by two-thirds of the Assembly plenary, and sits for two years. A *Comisión Preliminar* of the 11 deputies issues the public call, receives nominations and pre-selects before names go to the plenary, and then joins the committee itself. The sole transitional provision directs the Assembly to name the new committee under the amended article, which opens the process for designating the principal and substitute magistrates of the Tribunal and the authorities of its auxiliary organs.

The joint statement of the dialogue delegations of September 18 records the start of the procedure to designate all the Tribunal's magistrates. On the accounts reached, the Assembly had still not named the members of the enlarged committee, so the statute is in force and the body it requires is not yet constituted. The gazette text was not read directly; the provisions above are as reported by the outlets named (Priority Transition Actions — Rebuilding the CNE and the TSJ; Priority Transition Actions — Statutory Realignment — 1998–2026 Law & Decree Review; Agenda for Democracy — Judicial Independence & Rule of Law; Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — Government and Opposition Delegations Extend the Second Dialogue Round to September 23 and Install a Technical Committee on Freedom of Expression). Sources: Gaceta Oficial (as reported by AlbertoNews, Noticiero Digital, La Patilla and Aporrea) · EFE (via Cooperativa) · Noticias de Aquí

Britain Will Appoint an Ambassador to Venezuela, Upgrading Its Diplomatic Relations

The British government told Parliament in a written statement on September 15, 2026 that it will upgrade diplomatic relations with Venezuela by appointing an ambassador, to strengthen its ability to support a transition to democracy; CNN en Español adds the defence of human rights after the June 24 earthquakes. The statement calls the decision part of a broader international re-engagement, says it represents no change in the United Kingdom's assessment of recent electoral processes, including those of 2024, and endorses no party, the United Kingdom recognising states rather than governments. No ambassador has been named. Colin Dick, head of the British Embassy in Caracas, said he hoped the two countries would work more closely.

Venezuela's deputy foreign minister for Europe and North America, Oliver Blanco, said the government values the decision and will deepen dialogue and cooperation, and, in Xinhua's account, stressed recovering resources that belong to Venezuelans — Xinhua setting the statement beside the gold held at the Bank of

England (Priority Transition Actions — Gold Reserve Recovery (UK) — the Bank of England Bars). **Miranda Institute finding:** no rupture of UK–Venezuela relations appears in the sources reached, and the embassy is open, so this is a change in the level of representation rather than a restoration (Priority Transition Actions — Full Operational Resuming of Embassies and Consulates Abroad). Sources: Reuters (via The Business Standard) · CNN en Español (via KVIA) · Xinhua

Paraguay's President Visits Caracas and Opens a Dialogue on Restoring the Relations Broken in January 2025

President Santiago Peña of Paraguay was received by the acting President Delcy Rodríguez at Miraflores Palace on September 19, 2026, on a brief visit, accompanied by the first lady, Leticia Ocampos, and the foreign minister, Rubén Ramírez Lezcano. Ramírez and the Venezuelan foreign minister, Félix Plascencia, signed a joint communiqué which, on the accounts of the Paraguayan and Venezuelan outlets that report it, commits the two governments to dialogue towards the normalization of bilateral relations and lays the bases for an eventual restoration of diplomatic and consular relations; its full text was not reached. The agenda, EFE reports, included migration, the welfare of each country's nationals, economic and commercial development, transnational organized crime, and Paraguay's debt for Venezuelan oil purchases, which EFE puts at an estimated US$300 million.

Venezuela broke relations with Paraguay in January 2025, after Peña recognized Edmundo González Urrutia as the winner of the 2024 presidential election. **Relations are not restored:** no embassy reopening, ambassador or consular date has been announced, and both governments describe the communiqué as the start of a process. Efecto Cocuyo notes that Peña is the second sitting head of state to visit Venezuela since January 3, after Colombia's Gustavo Petro; he travels on to the UN General Assembly (Priority Transition Actions — Full Operational Resuming of Embassies and Consulates Abroad). Sources: EFE (via ABC Color) · Efecto Cocuyo · Última Hora · ABC Color

Washington Drops Venezuela From Its List of Countries That "Failed Demonstrably" on Drug Control

The President's determination on major drug transit and producing countries for fiscal year 2027, sent to Congress on September 15, 2026 and released on September 16, no longer designates Venezuela as having "failed demonstrably" to meet its counternarcotics obligations. Venezuela had carried the designation since 2005, Reuters reported. The memorandum ties the change to Nicolás Maduro's removal and to growing cooperation with the interim government against cartels.

Venezuela stays on the list of 23 major transit or producing countries, which is not itself a finding of non-cooperation. The White House names Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma and Colombia as having failed demonstrably, and the memorandum signals that Colombia could come off if coca eradication advances. The determination is the President's annual one, not an act of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and it is a separate instrument from the OFAC and terrorist designations carried in the Sanctions Architecture (FTO Designations). Sources: The White House · Reuters (via GV Wire) · Al Jazeera

The White House Says Trump Will Meet Acting President Rodríguez at the UN General Assembly on September 22

The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, **Mike Waltz**, said on September 18, 2026 that President Trump will hold a "pull-aside" with acting President **Delcy Rodríguez** at a General Assembly leaders' reception he is hosting in New York on **Tuesday, September 22** — in AP's account, more casual than a formal bilateral sit-down — and it would be their first in-person meeting. Waltz gave no agenda, and in CNN's account said he did not know whether she would in fact travel. NTN24 reports that the UN's provisional list of speakers places Venezuela third in the afternoon session of **Thursday, September 24**, after Uruguay and Senegal, under a head-of-state designation; the list itself was not read. Venezuela's communications ministry did not respond to Reuters, and no Venezuelan statement confirming the trip or the meeting was reached.

Milestone watch — New York: the Trump–Rodríguez pull-aside on Tuesday, September 22, and Venezuela's General Assembly address on Thursday, September 24; whether each takes place is reported in the next edition (Priority Transition Actions — Full Operational Resuming of Embassies and Consulates Abroad). Sources: AP (via KSAT) · Reuters (via 93.3 The Drive) · CNN (via ABC17 News) · NTN24

The Pentagon's Intelligence Chief Is Reported to Have Met Venezuelan Leaders in Caracas on September 17

Jennifer Jacobs, the CBS News White House correspondent, reported on September 17, 2026 that the Pentagon's top intelligence official was in Venezuela that day and that **Under Secretary Brad Hansell** met Venezuelan leaders, on sources familiar with the trip. El Pitazo reported, on its own sources, that Hansell was at the United States embassy in Caracas and met the acting President Delcy Rodríguez and her team for four hours, to coordinate her New York trip.

Bradley Hansell is Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, Senate-confirmed on July 22, 2025 and in office since July 25, 2025 — the Pentagon's senior civilian intelligence post, not a defence-secretary deputy. Neither government announced the visit or has commented on it, and beyond El Pitazo's account no agenda, counterpart list or duration has published; the Spanish-language outlets differ over whether to style him a war-department or defence-department under secretary, and the Pentagon title governs here. The post on X was not reached directly and is carried on the accounts of the outlets that reproduced it. The reported visit falls on the day the second round of dialogue resumed and days before the reported General Assembly trip (Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — The White House Says Trump Will Meet Acting President Rodríguez at the UN General Assembly on September 22; Priority Transition Actions — Full Operational Resuming of Embassies and Consulates Abroad). Sources: El Pitazo · El Nacional · AlbertoNews · Diario Las Américas

Government and Opposition Delegations Extend the Second Dialogue Round to September 23 and Install a Technical Committee on Freedom of Expression

The government delegation led by National Assembly President **Jorge Rodríguez** and an opposition delegation headed by former deputy **Dinorah Figuera** announced on **September 18, 2026**, in Caracas, that the second round of dialogue will sit through **Wednesday, September 23**. Their joint statement, as carried by EFE, installs a technical committee on freedom of expression and the right to information, which is to begin "a process of consultation, guarantees and verification" of progress with the parties concerned and the public; creates a joint monitoring commission, with equal membership, to oversee "continuous compliance with the agreements and commitments established"; welcomes the lifting of restrictions on several digital media, EFE among them; and records the start of the procedure to designate all the magistrates of the Supreme Tribunal of Justice. The talks are backed by the United States.

The statement names no members of either body and sets no timetable, and no text of the agreements the commission is to monitor has published. The Tribunal procedure it refers to rests on the reform published in *Gaceta Oficial Extraordinaria* N.º 7.074, and the *Comité de Postulaciones Judiciales* that reform enlarges had not been named on any account reached at this pass (Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — The Reform of the Ley Orgánica del TSJ Is Published in the Gaceta Oficial, Opening the Path to Naming New Magistrates; Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — CONATEL Orders Internet Providers to Unblock News Portals on the Eve of the Second Round of Dialogue; Priority Transition Actions — Opening of International &

National Media; Priority Transition Actions — Rebuilding the CNE and the TSJ; Priority Transition Actions — Statutory Realignment — 1998–2026 Law & Decree Review, whose Track 1 carries the Tribunal statute and whose Track 2 the media laws the committee reaches). Sources: EFE (via Infobae and Cooperativa)

María Corina Machado Says She Will Return to Venezuela, With No Date Set

The opposition leader María Corina Machado said in an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, published September 18, 2026, that she will return to Venezuela, that she cannot lead the process from abroad, and that her return is "not a challenge" but "a contribution to the process" — on the accounts of El Estímulo and CiberCuba, which carry the interview; the Journal's own article was not read. No date has been given. She said she plans to meet recently released political prisoners and civil organizations and to travel the country, and that she keeps good relations with the Trump administration; the Journal reports, as carried, that the White House asked her in September to visit Washington first. Machado first announced the decision on September 14, in an interview reported by VPItv, saying she expects a new CNE and a new TSJ before the end of 2026 and a date for elections. She has been outside Venezuela since December 2025.

Miranda Institute finding: the return is announced, not scheduled — no travel date, security arrangement or statement from the acting government on the announcement has published on any account reached (Priority Transition Actions — Rebuilding the CNE and the TSJ; Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — Government and Opposition Delegations Extend the Second Dialogue Round to September 23 and Install a Technical Committee on Freedom of Expression). Sources: El Estímulo · CiberCuba · Cactus24

CONATEL Orders Internet Providers to Unblock News Portals on the Eve of the Second Round of Dialogue

Venezuela's telecommunications regulator **CONATEL** announced on **September 16, 2026** that internet service providers had been notified to restore access to the domains of news portals blocked for years, and access began returning on **September 17**. In the statement as carried by the outlets reached, CONATEL says it "has received the technical notification to enable in their infrastructures the domain of several news portals", frames the measure as part of strengthening its regulatory and inspection work in telecommunications and as meeting "the need to offer Venezuelans adequate, protected and efficient access to information platforms", and reaffirms its commitment to supervising the spectrum. It names no negotiation and gives no political undertaking.

How much was actually restored is disputed, and the counts are carried as published rather than reconciled: **VE Sin Filtro**'s September 17 morning check found **eight** outlets unblocked across all providers and three more on some; **Espacio Público** counted **twelve** portals restored; **Descifrado** confirmed **at least ten**. VE Sin Filtro tracks roughly **200** blocked domains, **65** of them media outlets. El Pitazo, blocked since 2017, and El Nacional were still unreachable on the providers checked.

The sequence is on the record; the causal link is not. Crónica Uno reports that the measure follows a recommendation from the *Programa para la Paz y la Convivencia* (the Programme for Peace and Coexistence) to acting President Delcy Rodríguez to adopt measures favouring freedom of expression, and it lands as the second round of government–opposition negotiation resumed in Caracas on September 17 with freedom of expression on its agenda (Priority Transition Actions — Opening of International & National Media; Sectoral Profile — Telecom, Banking, Industrial Services & Agriculture, **Site blocking**). Sources: Crónica Uno · El Impulso · El Nacional · Descifrado · Diario Las Américas

Human Rights Watch's Deputy Executive Director Is Received in Caracas, 18 Years After the Organization's Expulsion

The acting President Delcy Rodríguez received a Human Rights Watch delegation led by **Federico Borello**, the organization's deputy executive director and director of programs, accompanied by the foreign minister Félix Plascencia and the first vice-minister Oliver Blanco. The foreign ministry described the agenda as measures favouring plurality of expression and a climate of democratic coexistence. It is the first such meeting in eighteen years: the organization's then Americas director was expelled from the country in 2008. **The date is not settled across the sources and both are carried:** the ministry's own release and Prensa Latina place the meeting on Thursday September 17, while EFE reported it on Friday September 18.

The visit closed on September 18. In EFE's account, Borello said there is "a pause in what we call repression", that members of the opposition and civil society feel "freer than before", and that more than 900 people detained for political reasons have been released while "hundreds more" remain held. He called for the release of all of them, the closure of El Rodeo I and of clandestine detention centres, the unblocking of censored media, the restoration of opposition leaders' political rights and the reform or repeal of laws used against dissent — on N Digital's account the organization also holds that the amnesty law's application is deficient — and said the organization plans regular monitoring visits; the delegation reported access without restrictions. No commitment by the government was recorded in the accounts reached, and the release count is the organization's and is carried beside the other counts in this edition without reconciliation (Priority Transition Actions — Release of Political Prisoners — Full Amnesty Implementation; Week's Headlines, September 21 edition — The UN Fact-Finding Mission Finds Venezuela's Repressive Institutions "Fundamentally Intact" After January 3). Sources: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (via MIPPCI and El Universal) · EFE (via ABC Color and Infobae) · Prensa Latina · N Digital

The UN Fact-Finding Mission Finds Venezuela's Repressive Institutions "Fundamentally Intact" After January 3

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela published its report to the 63rd session of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/63/57) on September 16, 2026, for presentation on September 18. Its central finding, in UN News's account, is that "State institutions responsible for repression, gross human rights violations and crimes against humanity remain fundamentally intact": no institutional reform has been made, the security and intelligence forces keep their structures and practices, at least 19 officials it links to violations remain in key posts, the *colectivos* (pro-government armed groups) have not been disarmed, and laws criminalizing dissent stand.

It records a significant decline in long-term detentions and enforced disappearances since January 3; 214 arbitrary detentions between September 1, 2025 and July 29, 2026, 94% of them before the end of 2025; and 64 new torture cases after January 3, including at El Rodeo and Fuerte Guaicaipuro. UN News gives an estimate of 379 to 500 people still detained and more than 100 political prisoners released; AFP gives 131 releases announced, about 80 confirmed by NGOs, and more than 300 still held. Both are carried. Mission chair Sofía Macher called the improvements "fragile and reversible". No government response was reported (Priority Transition Actions — Restructuring Intelligence Organizations & National Police; Release of Political Prisoners — Full Amnesty Implementation). Sources: UN News · AFP (via Courthouse News Service)

Alex Saab Pleads Guilty in Miami to Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering

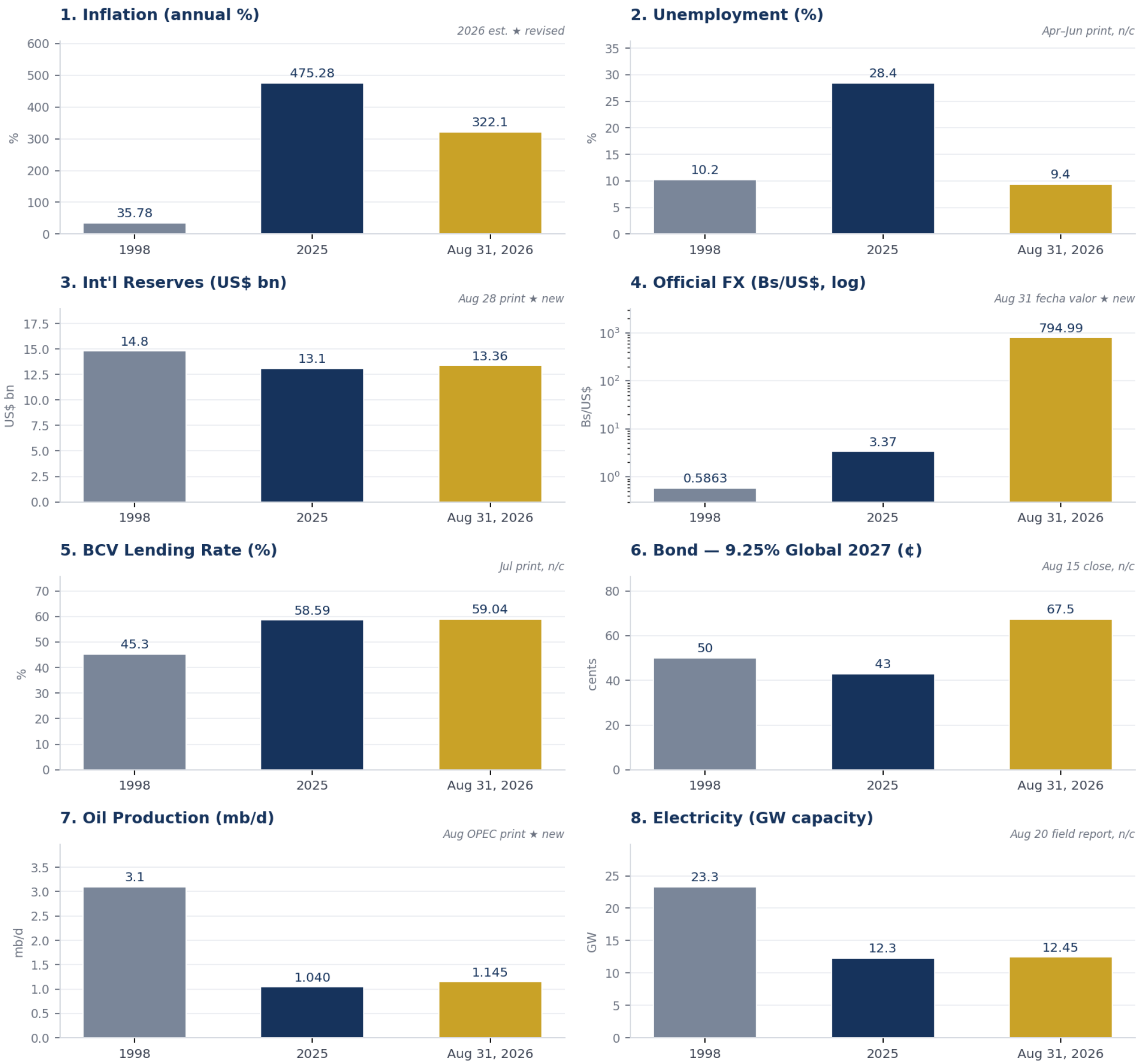
Alex Saab pleaded guilty on September 15, 2026, before Judge Kathleen M. Williams of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida in Miami, to conspiracy to commit money laundering and illicit financial transactions, under an agreement with prosecutors, EFE reported from the hearing. He had pleaded not guilty on July 24. The judge reviewed the 12-page plea agreement, whose terms were not disclosed, and Saab told the court that no promise beyond it and no threat had induced the plea. The count carries a maximum of 20 years, and sentencing is set for January 2027.

AP reports that Saab admitted skimming at least US$195 million from at least six contracts awarded to companies he controlled to import food and medicine under the CLAP programme, agreed to forfeit US$195 million in criminal proceeds, and agreed to cooperate in continuing federal investigations, with prosecutors to recommend the low end of the guideline range and to seek further reductions if the cooperation proves substantial; to whom forfeited funds would go is not stated. Saab, 54, first appeared on these charges on May 18, two days after his deportation from Venezuela; he had been released in 2023 in a prisoner exchange and later served as Venezuela's minister of industries. The case belongs to the CLAP food-import cluster carried in the Privatization Schedule (A.6 — Acquisitions by Government-Aligned Figures Under Investigation). Sources: EFE (via El Comercio) · AP (via KSAT)

Key Economic Indicators — Weekly Dashboard

The dashboard runs every week, as a continuation of the Week's Headlines (curator direction, September 8, 2026). The eight charts below plot annual inflation, unemployment, international reserves, the official exchange rate, the BCV lending rate, the benchmark sovereign bond, oil production and electricity capacity against the same two structural benchmarks in every edition, 1998 and 2025, so that the distance travelled is visible rather than a single point. **Where a series has taken no new print in the week, the last printed figure stands** — carried forward, marked n/c and labelled with the period it actually belongs to, never left blank and never estimated in place of a missing print. **The reading of the numbers is not repeated here.** The structural analysis — the currency path, the reserves trajectory, credit conditions, oil and electricity status, debt and bond moves — is issued once a month, in the Monthly Analysis, part two of the Monthly Economic Review on the second Monday.

MIRANDA INSTITUTE® — Key Economic Indicators · 1998 · 2025 · August 31, 2026



FOUR series carry new prints for the month ended August 31, 2026: the August INPC (8.9% monthly, BCV, published September 4), which rebuilds Chart 1's estimate; international reserves (August 28 close); the official exchange rate (August 31 fecha valor); and OIL PRODUCTION, where the OPEC report published September 10 puts August at 1.145 mb/d on SECONDARY SOURCES and revises July to ≈1.122 from the 1.117 previously carried. Chart 7 charts secondary sources only: the Ministry of Hydrocarbons' direct-communication figure of 1.201 mb/d for August is a different series and is not charted. Four series are carried n/c because no newer primary print exists. Chart 1's 2026 bar is an ESTIMATE — 200.11% cumulative Jan–Aug with August's 8.9% repeated Sep–Dec — not a print; the prior estimate of 582.7% was built on July's 19.9% and is superseded, not corrected. Chart 6: the 1998 bar is an ≈50¢ estimate and the 2025 bar is the January 7, 2026 mark; the current bar is the August 15, 2026 close, carried n/c, and a 54¢ September 3 mark for unnamed 2027 paper is NOT the same series and is not blended. Chart 8: the bars are range midpoints. Underlying source: see Comparative Data Reference 6.1 — Chart Data & Indicators (Dashboard Source) and the footnotes beneath it.

Chart source note — the underlying data for every bar above, series by series, with its own verify date and its own footnotes, is carried in the Comparative Data Reference: see Chart Data & Indicators (Dashboard Source).

Weekly print status — September 21, 2026 edition, as it stands at the September 20, 2026 in-cycle pass (the FIRST pass of the September 20 curator day and the EIGHTH in-cycle pass of the cycle). ***The indicator***

sweep was NOT re-run at this pass and no figure is re-dated; *what follows is the result of the sweep re-run at curator direction at the September 19 pass — outcome (b):* ***no new print belonging to the reporting month arrived****, so the charts are unchanged.* The current column is the close of the month ended **August 31, 2026** — the September 21 edition is a third Monday, and the Monthly Economic Review that reports September does not issue until the second Monday of October — so all EIGHT charted series stand as the September 13 rollover and the September 12 pass left them, each with its own true verify date: annual inflation at the 2026 ESTIMATE of ≈322.1% built on the August INPC of 8.9% monthly published by the BCV on September 4 (200.11% cumulative January–August, August's rate repeated September–December, and labelled an estimate wherever it appears); unemployment on the INE April–June quarter, the July–September quarter not yet published; international reserves at US$13,363M for the week ended August 28; the official rate at Bs 794.9917/US$ on the August 31 fecha valor; the BCV average active lending rate at the July print of 59.04%, the August print not reached because bcv.org.ve is refused to the fetch tools and no outlet reached carries it; the benchmark 9.25% Global 2027 at the August 15 close of 67.50¢, no later close of the same bond reached; oil production at 1.145 mb/d for August 2026 on OPEC secondary sources, published September 10, with July revised to 1.122 by the same report, the next report due in October; and electricity capacity at the August 20 field report. The parallel rate is likewise carried n/c at ≈Bs 946.72, the August 26 Binance P2P average. Both dashboards were re-rendered from the container's own graph scripts at the September 19 pass, checked at 1870 × 2108 and looked at at the titles, the bottom row and the footnote block; no value in either script changed. **SEPTEMBER readings recorded here and deliberately NOT charted**, because the current column is the close of the reporting month: international reserves at **US$13,101M for the week ended September 11**, up 2.32% or US$297M on the week, of which US$13,098M at the BCV and US$3M in the FEM (new at the September 19 pass, Finanzas Digital); the official rate at **Bs 848.5458/US$ on the September 18 fecha valor**, +0.13% on the preceding session (new at the September 19 pass, Finanzas Digital); and, carried from the September 13 rollover, reserves at US$12,804M for the week ended September 4, the official rate at Bs 842.2067/US$ on the September 15 fecha valor and at Bs 798.326/US$ on the September 1 fecha valor. All go into the next monthly document. The September 18 record electricity demand of 16,030 MW reported by the electricity ministry is a DEMAND figure and is not the capacity series charted; it is reported in the Guri item of this edition. **Publications not reached at the September 19 pass:** bcv.org.ve, refused to the fetch tools, so every central-bank series above is carried from the outlets that publish it and nothing is attributed to bcv.org.ve; and opec.org and its monthly report, at 402. On price, Merey averaged **$76.82/bbl in August** against an OPEC reference basket of **$86.44/bbl**, both carried n/c. No figure is dated ahead of its source, and no commercial claim — a production target, an investment commitment or an official forecast — enters these charts or the table behind them.