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Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro gives a press conference in Caracas, Venezuela, Monday, Sept 15, 2025. (AP/Jesus Vargas)

by Associated Press

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Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Monday said he has asked Pope Leo XIV to help maintain peace in the South American country.

Maduro's comments come as the United States military continues to [strike alleged drug-carrying boats](#) in the waters off Venezuela in what [President Donald Trump has declared](#) an "armed conflict" with cartels. Maduro said he sought Leo's help in a letter.

"I have great faith that Pope Leo, as I stated in the letter I sent him, will help Venezuela preserve and achieve peace and stability," Maduro said during his weekly show on state television.

Maduro did not provide details of the letter. His government's press office did not immediately respond to a request for a copy of the document.

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The [U.S. military has carried four deadly strikes](#) in the Caribbean since last month. The latest killed four people on Friday.

The Trump administration has told lawmakers he was treating drug traffickers as unlawful combatants and military force was required to combat them. That assertion of presidential war powers sets the stage for expanded action and raises [questions about how far the administration will go](#) without [sign-off from Congress](#).

Maduro has repeatedly said the U.S. military's actions are designed to oust him.

This story appears in the **Pope Leo XIV** feature series. [View the full series](#).