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# Department of State Offers Reward for Information to Bring Colombian Money Launderer to Justice

## PRESS STATEMENT

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Today, the U.S. Department of State is announcing a reward offer of up to \$10 million for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of Colombian national Alvaro Pulido Vargas. This announcement complements the U.S. Department of Justice announcement of a criminal indictment against Pulido and others for money laundering in connection with a foreign bribery scheme. Beginning in 2015, Pulido and others began working to obtain or retain contracts to provide food to the Venezuelan people. Pulido and his co-conspirators allegedly marked-up the cost of producing the boxes of food in order to make a personal profit from their production. From this cost mark-up, the conspirators were able to pay bribes and kickbacks to those Venezuelan government officials who assisted them in obtaining the contract to produce the boxes, and make millions of dollars in profit for themselves.

According to the indictment against Pulido, as the Maduro regime's shortage of U.S. dollars limited their ability to pay foreign companies, including their ability to pay Pulido and others for the importation into and distribution of boxes of food in Venezuela, Pulido and a co-conspirator started a business to liquidate the country's gold. The money obtained through the gold liquidation was then used to pay foreign companies, including companies controlled by Pulido and a co-conspirator.

Pulido was charged via indictment in October 2021 along with four other individuals. The charges include one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering and four counts of laundering of monetary instruments. These charges are associated with the alleged felony violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and offenses against a foreign nation, specifically Venezuela, involving bribery of a public official, and the misappropriation, theft, and embezzlement of public funds by and for the benefit of a public official, as provided by Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 1956(c)(7)(B)(iv).

This reward is offered under the Department of State's Transnational Organized Crime Rewards Program (TOCRP). More than 75 transnational criminals and major narcotics traffickers have been brought to justice under the TOCRP and the Narcotics Rewards Program (NRP) since 1986. The Department has paid more than \$135 million in rewards to date.

The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs manages the TOCRP in close coordination with the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, and other U.S. government agencies.

For more information on the individual listed above and the TOCRP and NRP, please see **Department of State INL AntiCrime Rewards Program**

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