



# The Growth of Global Election Disinformation: The Role and Methodology of Government-linked Cyber Actors

Sandra Quincoses  
Intelligence Analyst - Nisos

## Current:

- Senior Intelligence Analyst at Nisos
- Adjunct professor at Florida International University (FIU)- Intelligence Fellowship Program
- PhD Social Psychology

## Former:

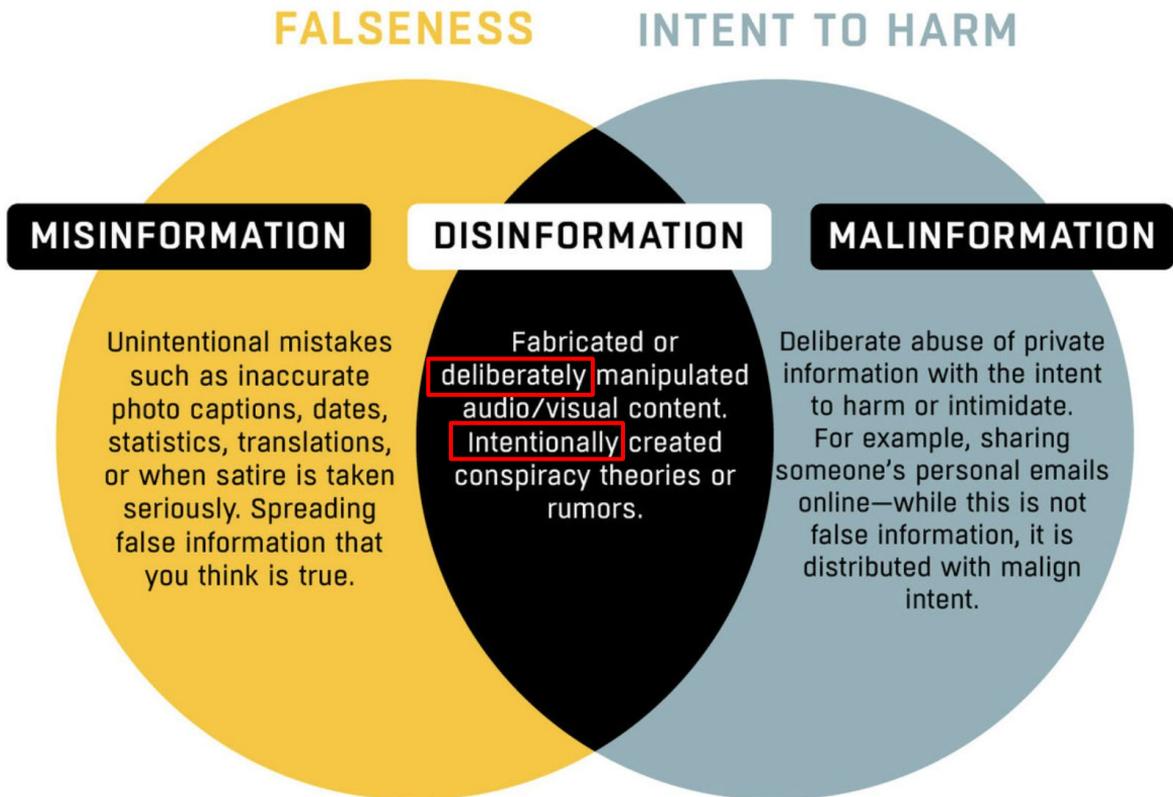
- OSINT: Department of Defense - US Southern Command
- Social Media Intelligence Analyst, Spanish Linguist, and Instructor at Dunami Inc. (Acquired by Babel Street)



 @Dr\_SandraQ

- Disinformation
- Geopolitical Setting
- Discovery
- Content Analysis
- Attribution
- Motive Revealed
- Impact
- Post-Publication Behavior
- Key Takeaways





Content with the **purpose** of misleading the public is dangerous.

Intention

**Who** and **Why**



Disinformation thrives during **political unrest**.



**Por una vida digna  
de ser vivida**

Regulación del precio del alquiler  
y venta de vivienda

Follow

**@halecos Amarillos** GLOBAL  w'ÑÓNŸ'MOGUŠ'n  
@ChalecosAmarill

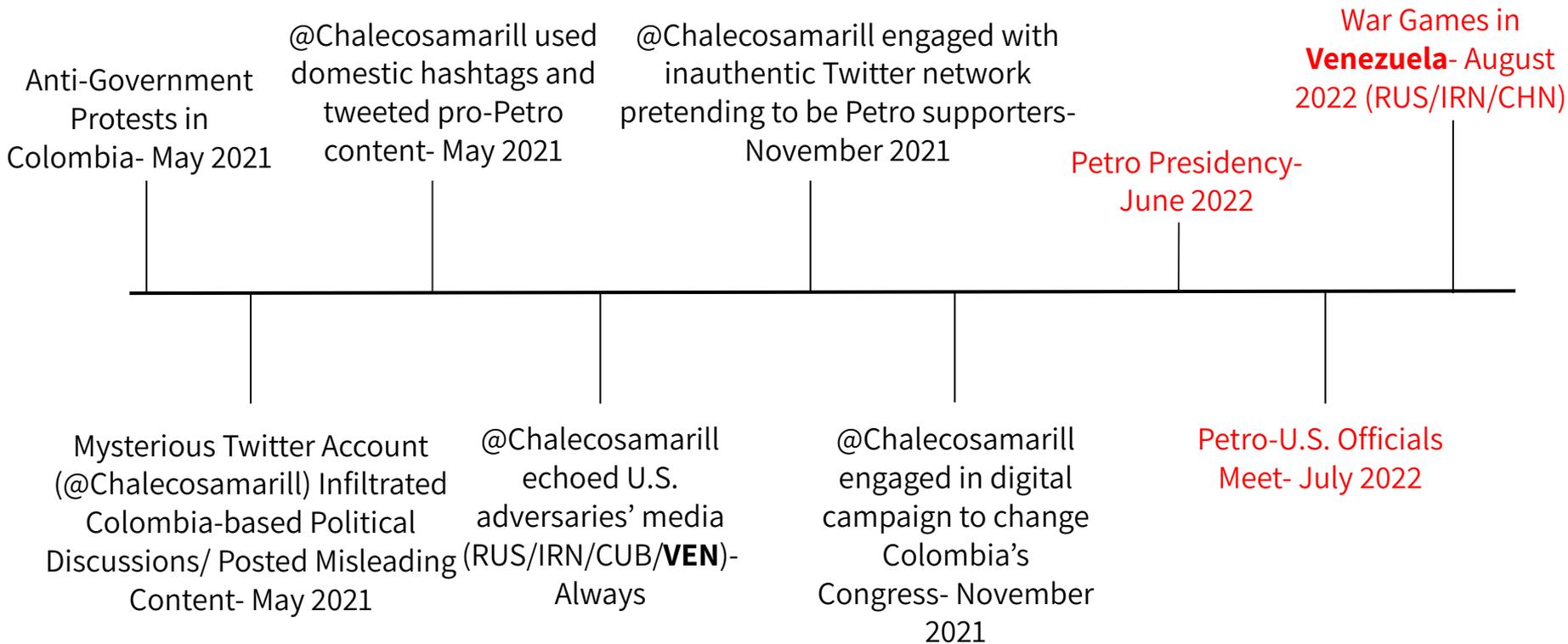
 #CloversForAssange  

🔥🔥 LINK 🔥🔥  
#ChalecosAmarillos    ... nos organizamos  
#YellowVests  we organize  
Link  [t.me/GlobalRevolut](https://t.me/GlobalRevolut)

 Community  [t.me/GlobalRevoluti...](https://t.me/GlobalRevoluti...)  Joined December 2018

101.4K Following 144.1K Followers

# @Chalecosamarill's Activities and Subsequent Events



- Closest South American ally to the U.S.
- Collaborated on national security and economic issues
- Only country in South America that has never elected a leftist leader (until now)
- Aligned on political concerns involving the governments of **Venezuela**, Cuba, and Nicaragua



As of June 2022,  
President-elect of Colombia

Former Senator



First leftist president of Colombia

Friend of the FARC



Friend of the late Fidel  
Castro (CUB) and late  
**Hugo Chavez (VEN)**



## Latin America Increasingly Leaning Left

Government Ideology as of June 2022



Source: Economist, U.S. Global Investors

- Critical of U.S. economic sanctions
- Does not favor an anti-narcotics agenda
- Critical of extradition of criminals
- Promotes the rebuilding of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and **Venezuela**
- ***Question to you: Who else wins if Petro wins?***



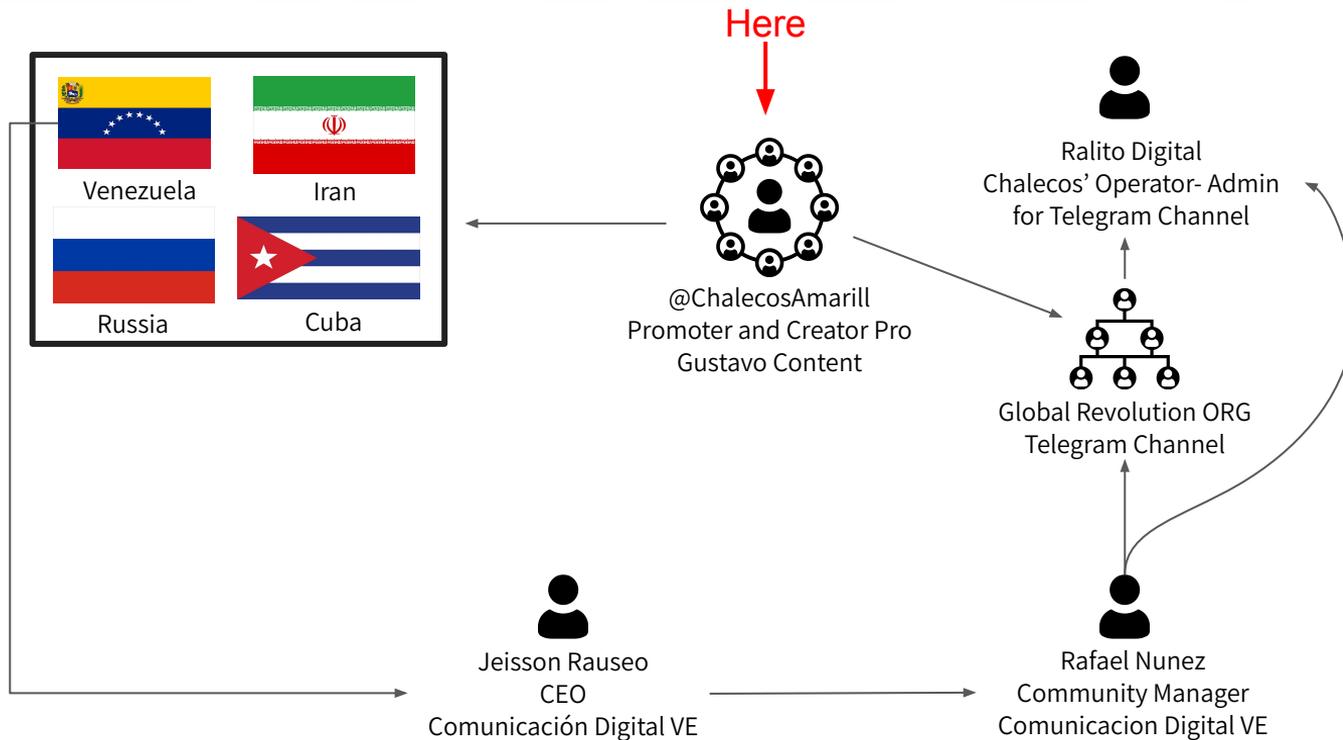
## Hypothesis

The **Venezuelan** government is attempting to influence perceptions in Colombia with the goal of achieving political change - getting Petro elected.

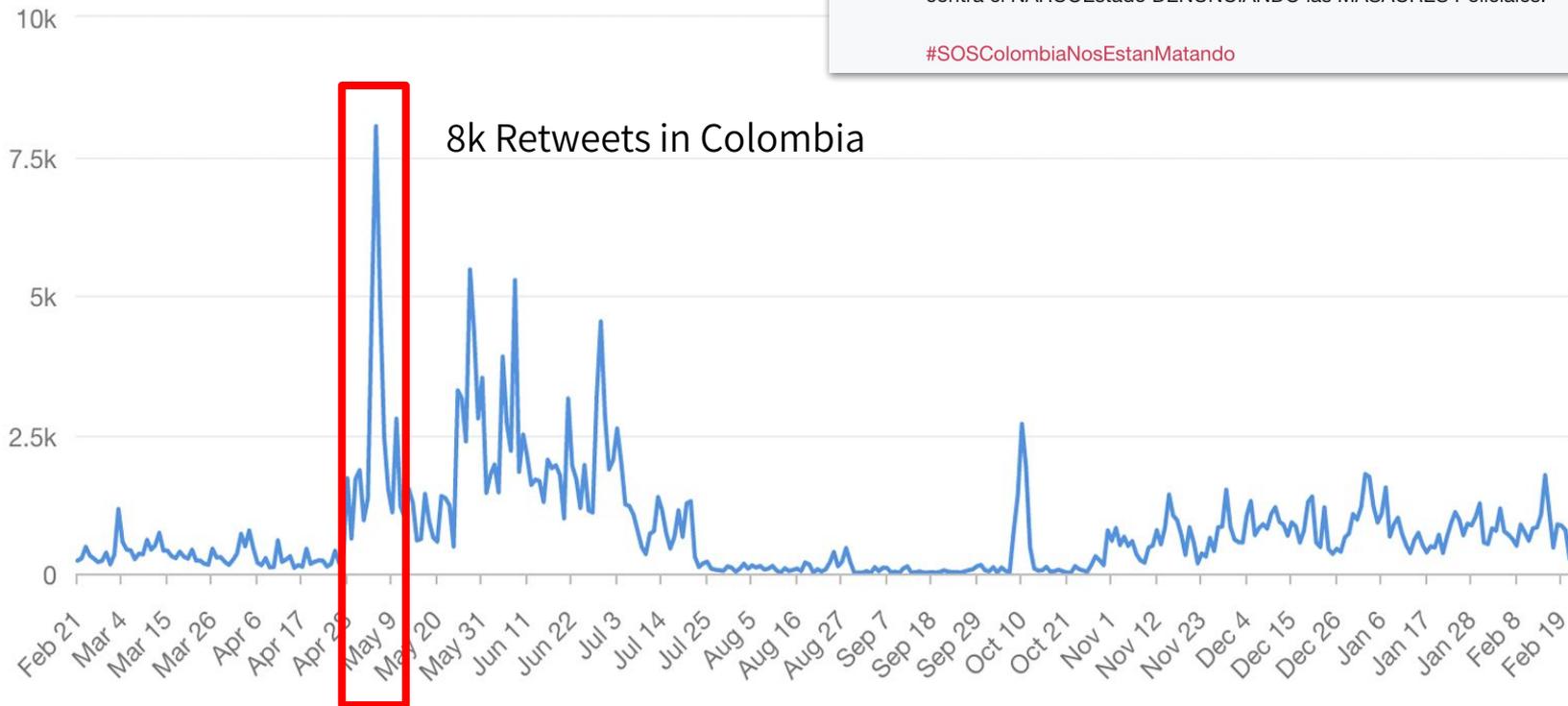
## Result

The government of Venezuela likely used a third-party firm to conduct and engage in information operations, to include disinformation, to help get Petro elected.

- **Who:** (Likely) Venezuela's Government
- **Why:** (Likely) Help soften U.S. foreign policy toward Venezuela



# Discovery: Chalecos' Reach in Colombia on Twitter



 **@halecosAmarillosGLOBAL**  **"ANONYMOUS"** @ChalecosAmarill · 1m

  En **#Colombia** así fue la ENORME movilización en Bogotá de ciclistas contra el NARCOEstado DENUNCIANDO las MASACRES Policiales.

[#SOSColombiaNosEstanMatando](#)

8k Retweets in Colombia





@Halecos Amarillos<sup>GLOBAL</sup> 🍀 "ANONYMOUS" @C... · Jun 15, 2021 ...

🚫🔴 In [#Colombia](#) here they clearly state that IT WAS NOT A CAR BOMB, the COMMUNICATION DRUG MEDIA@[Weekly magazine](#) @[NewsCaracol](#) HANDLE AS ALWAYS.

🔥 SHARE THAT YOU KNOW 🔥

Replying to @Team\_Game @FisicoImpuro @CMonteroOficial @petrogustavo @ActualidadRT





“In #Colombia #LastHour- In Pereira, an ESMAD tank advanced running over several protesters. This is a clear violation of human rights. #killercops”- @Chalecosamarill

## Colombian police tank did not run over protesters

By APRIL MULATO May 3, 2021



Click to copy

### RELATED TOPICS

AP Check

**THE CLAIM:** A video shows the moment in which a Colombian Police tank rolled over demonstrators who took to the streets in the city of Pereira on April 30 to protest against the tax reform promoted by President Iván Duque.

**AP VERIFICATION:** False. Although the authorities' tank did advance at a considerable speed while there were demonstrators in the area, the vehicle did not run over any of them.

**THE FACTS:** Through their Twitter account, the Colombian Police shared another recording of the same moment and in it you can see the tank making its way into

# Content Analysis: Participation in Pro-Petro Digital Campaign to Change Colombia's Congress

## **“We are looking for five million votes for the lists to Congress”: Petro**

The senator from Colombia Humana gave way to the conformation of the lists in the Historical Pact.

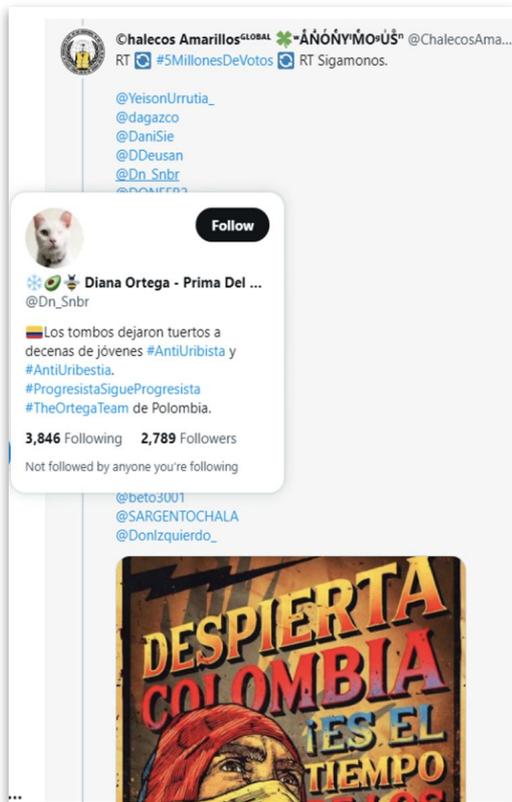
12/14/2021



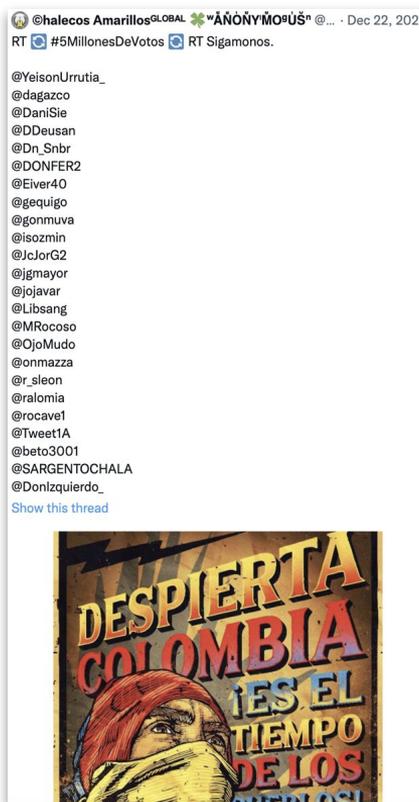
Gustavo Petro defended the conformation of the lists of the Historical Pact to Congress. - Photo: LEÓN DARÍO PELÁEZ SÁNCHEZ

## Interactions with Inauthentic Network Engaged in Campaign

**November  
2021**



**February  
2022**





**Gustavo Petro** ✓

@petrogustavo



If we want to talk seriously about work in Colombia, we have to talk about the possession of the land, the democratization of credit in the popular economy, the prioritization of production, the generalization of knowledge, it is the **avocado**, **the bee** and the pie

8:58 AM · Mar 1, 2019 · Twitter Web Client

**745** Retweets   **61** Quote Tweets   **2,158** Likes



Follow



**Diana Ortega - Prima Del ...**  
@Dn\_Snbr

🇨🇴 Los tombos dejaron tuertos a decenas de jóvenes [#AntiUribista](#) y [#AntiUribestia](#).  
[#ProgresistaSigueProgresista](#)  
[#TheOrtegaTeam](#) de Colombia.

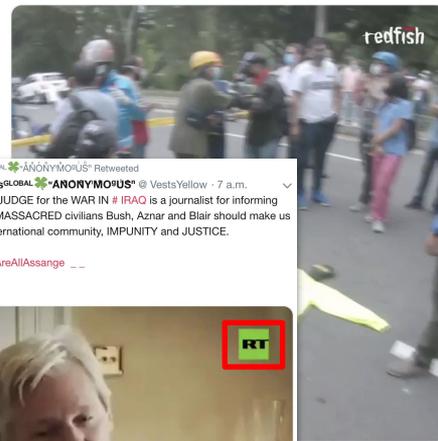
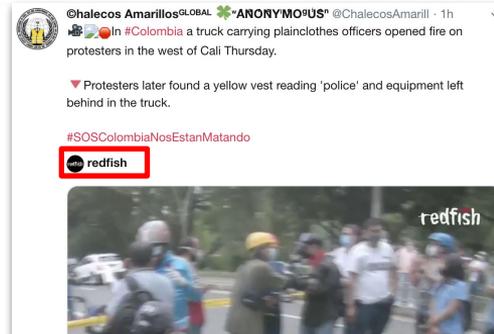
**3,846** Following   **2,789** Followers

Not followed by anyone you're following





@ChalecosAmarill  
Promoter and Creator of  
Pro Gustavo Content



30 Mar, 2015 21:02 / Home / World News

## RT and Venezuela TeleSUR journalists unite to provide fresh perspective on news



RT's Spanish channel and pan-Latin American network TeleSUR in Venezuela launched a new joint project on Monday, aimed at providing a different perspective to Western mainstream media.

Titled "Venezuela and Russia. At gunpoint" ("Venezuela y Rusia en la mira" in Spanish), the project will feature a series of programs about the two countries and other international news relating to them. Broadcast as a telebridge, the format of the show will enable discussions between the studios on the two continents.

## Venezuelan President visits HispanTV facilities

Friday, 10 June 2022 19:54 [ Last Update: Friday, 10 June 2022 20:29 ]

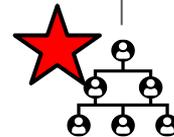




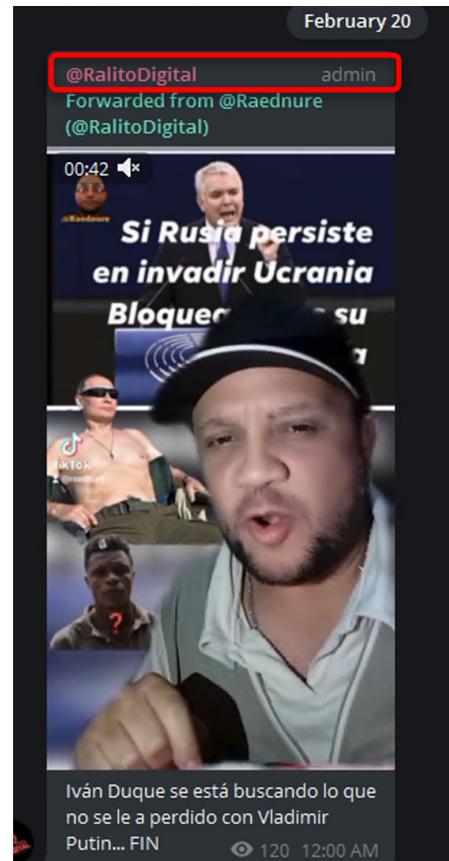
@ChalecosAmarill  
Promoter and Creator of  
Pro Gustavo Content



Ralito Digital  
Chalecos' Operator- Admin  
for its Telegram Channel



Global Revolution ORG  
Telegram Channel





**Ralito**  
@\_Ralito

Marketing Político || Consultor Creativo  
en #RRSS || Ingeniería Social Inversa ||  
[@ChalecosAmarillos](#) GLOBAL  
"ANONYMOUS"

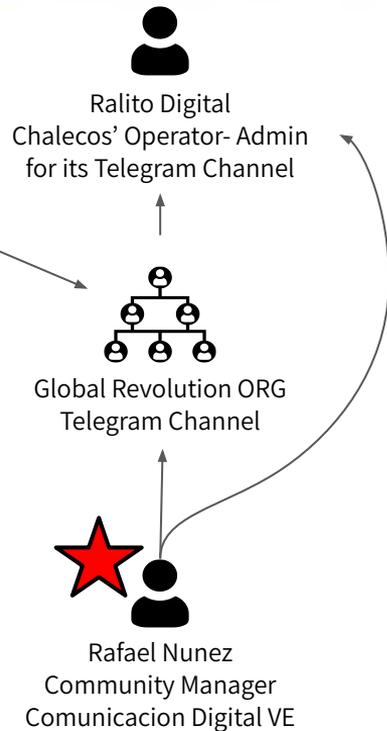
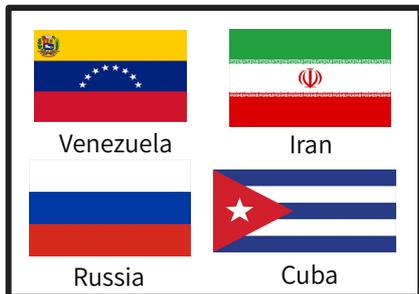
Venezuela  
 [instagram.com/ralitodigital/](https://www.instagram.com/ralitodigital/)



**@RalitoDigital**  
@RalitoDigital

Influencer **Marketing Político** Sobre la  
situación de la crisis mundial de los  
pueblos En glutinosidad con los  
[#ChalecosAmarillos](#) 🇺🇸

Venezuela  
 [instagram.com/ralitodigital/](https://www.instagram.com/ralitodigital/)  
 Joined April 2010





**Rafael Nunez**  
Degree in Bolivarian University of Venezuela  
Digital Communication VE · Bolivarian University of Venezuela  
Venezuela · 93 connections



**@RalitoDigital**

raednure · Follow

Today I had the opportunity to share with a friend of years, from my same town, my brother Daniel Reina, operations manager of CANTV, a great professional, honest and excellent human being. I certify and attest to that. I wish you thousands of blessings and successes in your laudable work of well-being for those in a hurry to access this important communication and innovation methodology.

The task is not easy, but not impossible... THE END@cantv.ve

#Apure #Viral #RalitoDigital

Sw

2022/1/10 13:09

Be the first to like this  
JANUARY 10

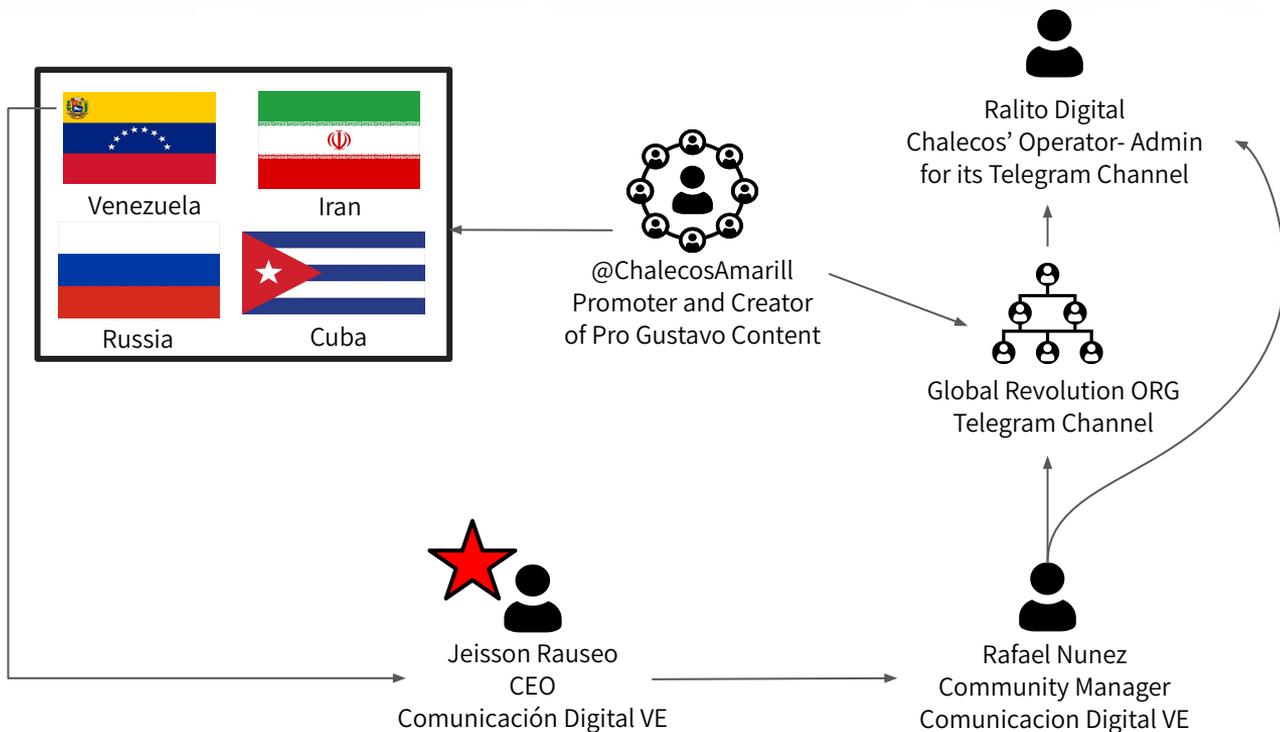


**@Raednure**  
@Raednure

Marketing Político | Consultor Creativo en #RRSS || Ingeniería Social Inversa

Apure, Venezuela | Joined September 2021

23 Following 144 Followers





- CEO of Comunicacion Digital VE- “Strategic and intelligent digital **marketing**”
- Formerly Director of Social Media at **Venezuela**’s Ministry of Communications and Information (MINCI)
  - “Retired” in 2016
  - Active government email- **Venezuela**’s National Institute for Socialist Training and Education

### Page transparency

Page information for Comunicación Digital VE ⓘ



**Comunicación Digital VE**  
Internet company

#### History ⓘ

- Changed name to Comunicación Digital VE  
January 22, 2017
- Changed name to Periódico Marketing Digital VE  
January 9, 2017
- Changed name to Periódico Marketing  
November 24, 2016
- Created - periodico Patria Grande**  
September 21, 2009

| Attribute     | Value   |
|---------------|---|
| WHOIS Server  | whois.nic.ve  |
| Registrar     | NIC-VE  |
| Domain Status | -   |
| Email         | -<br>Telecomunicacionesdnsmaster@mippci.gob.ve (tech)<br>Informacióndnsmaster@mippci.gob.ve (registrant, billing)<br>Tecnologiadnsmaster@mippci.gob.ve (admin)  |
| Name          | admin-c: CON000020009 (registrant)<br>Coordinador de Telecomunicacionesdnsmaster@mippci.gob.ve (tech)<br>Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Comunicación y la Dirección General de la Oficina de (registrant, billing, admin) |
| Organization  | -<br>Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Comunicación y la Información (registrant, admin, billing)  |
| Street        | -<br>Final del Boulevard Panteón (registrant, admin, billing)   |
| City          | -<br>Caracas (registrant, admin, billing)   |

Website: patriagrande[.]com.ve





**Diosdado Cabello**  
Deputy to the National Assembly of Venezuela



**Jorge Arreaza**  
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela

← **JD Bartolo R**  
@JDBartoloR

Followers Following



**Diosdado Cabello R**  
@dcabellor  
Venezolano, Bolivariano, revolucionario y Chavista radical, en la lucha por la construcción del Socialismo

Follow



**PSUV** ✓  
@PartidoPSUV  
Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela, el partido más grande de la historia venezolana, el partido del pueblo y del Comandante Eterno Hugo Chávez.

Follow



**Jorge Arreaza M** ✓  
@jaarreaza  
Militante Socialista-Chavista-Bolivariano. ¡Patriota! Candidato de la Patria a la Gobernación del Estado Barinas. ¡Unid@s, siempre Venceremos!

Follow



**MIPPCI** ✓  
@Mippcivzla  
Cuenta Oficial del Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Comunicación e Información.

Follow



Petro was elected in  
June 2022

العربي | In | Fr

Common Group. Lebanese  
Al Manar TV

@almanarnewsSP

MENU

HOMEPAGE NEWS SAYYED NASRALLAH'S SPEECHES HEZBOLLAH STATEMENTS FREC

The last

opening of an Israeli channel in Morocco

The Russian Ministry of Defense announces

### Naval units from Russia, China and Iran will participate in a military exercise in Venezuelan waters in August

Two weeks ago July 7, 2022



Latin America - News - Venezuela

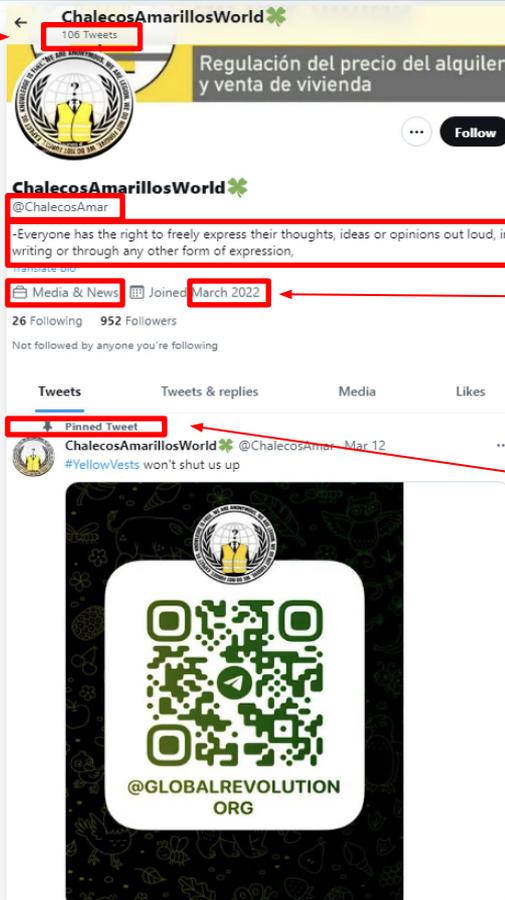
f t g+



Less Active

Variation of the Same  
Screen Name (Established a  
Brand)

...But its Operators  
Conduct "Political  
Marketing"



New Account

Telegram  
Channel  
Upfront



**Ralito**  
@\_Ralito

Marketing Político || Consultor Creativo  
en #RRSS Ingeniería Social Inversa |  
[@ChalecosAmarillos](#) GLOBAL  
"ANÓNIMO@US"

- Venezuela
- [instagram.com/ralitodigital/](https://www.instagram.com/ralitodigital/)



**@RalitoDigital**  
@RalitoDigital

Influencer Marketing Político Sobre la  
situación de la crisis mundial de los  
pueblos En glutinosidad con los  
[#ChalecosAmarillos](#) 🧑

- Venezuela
- [instagram.com/ralitodigital/](https://www.instagram.com/ralitodigital/)
- Joined April 2010

Información Chalecos Amarillos Reply

🔴 Even when they suspend us they talk about us on Twitter 🤔

<https://twitter.com/ElPitazoTV/status/1506103118706008066?s=19>

Twitter

El Pitazo

Know! Nisos researchers uncovered a prolific campaign by Venezuelan left-wing organizations that are pushing narratives on social media in support...



387 12:29 PM

26 March 2022

 nisos-report-colombian-el...rmation-campaign-2022.pdf

16.0 MB

nisos-report-colombian-election-disinformation-campaign-2022.pdf

325 4:56 AM

- 🔴 From the report it seems that they have given an order to Twitter and paid to close my account to harm Gustavo Petro in the presidential elections in #Colombia.
- ▼ In the report they call us a disinformation account and justify it by saying that we amplify news from other disinformation media such as Hispan TV, RT and Ina and call us allies of Maduro.

323 4:58 AM

3 May 2022

Thank you, Cyberscoop!

Written by [Suzanne Smalley](#)

Mar 21, 2022 | CYBERSCOOP

An influential Twitter account known as @ChalecosAmarill — [since removed by the social media platform](#) — also advocated for additional presidential candidates with foreign policy positions promoted by U.S. adversaries, including in Russia, Venezuela and Cuba, [according to the research from threat intelligence firm Nisos.](#)

SUBSCRIBE | ABOUT | RSS

CYBERSCOOP

BROUGHT TO YOU BY SNG

UKRAINE THREATS POLICY PRIVACY TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE MONEY SPECIAL WATCH LISTEN EVENTS INSIGHTS

NTT DATA

Multi-Cloud Mayhem?  
NTT DATA's Joe Kyle helps sort it out

WATCH THE VIDEO

GEOPOLITICS

## Venezuelan leftists took to Twitter in attempt to swing Colombian presidential election



Information Classification: General

1. Do not trust sources you do not know
2. Sources of information reveal motive
3. Digital actors engaged in Information Operations (IO) adapt
  - One case is a snapshot in time, next time, methodology could be different
4. Think about IOs as marketing campaigns, which requires:
  - Request -> Research -> Planning -> Operation -> Review-> New Request, etc.
5. Academics are studying how you “Fact Check”
  - Adversaries can access this information and use it to deceive...



## INFORMATION OR DISINFORMATION? READER AND FAKE-NEWS

Research paper on "Media (media) and mass communications"

Ziokazov Kirill Vitalievich Voroshilova Maria Borisovna Ziokazova Julia Valerievna

CC BY 57 fifteen

## ANNOTATION

scientific article on the media (media) and mass communications, the author of scientific work is Ziokazov Kirill Vitalievich, Voroshilova Maria Borisovna, Ziokazova Yulia Valerievna

**The purpose of this article is to describe the reader's** subjective strategies for evaluating **disinformation**. The study was initiated by the problem of counteracting the growth of criminalization of the information space. The increase in the number of cases of fraud committed through **Internet communication** actualizes the issues of scientific counteraction to **information impact** on the audience. To do this, the article discusses the information **verification strategies**, their characteristics are given. The lexical, thematic and knowledge approaches to the assessment of facts are demonstrated, the features of their application are revealed. Subjective **information verification** strategies are shown, which are a reflection of social practices and the individual experience of **the reader**. The analytical, cognitive, social strategies of fact checking are described, the characteristics of their application, the specifics of their use in relation to different conditions and features of the information received are given. The role of trust as a subjective form of the **reader's attitude is revealed** to the content and source of information, the method of obtaining it. In the course of empirical research, the distribution of these strategies is checked, and an estimate of the frequency of their occurrence is given. For the purposes of the study, a special questionnaire is being developed, and a statistical assessment of its reliability indicators is carried out. The study sample is 725 people, 47% men, cf. age 29.3 years, SD = 5.9 years. The sample consisted of residents of three constituent entities of the Russian Federation who have an education and work in the fields of industry, trade, education and medicine. The results of the study showed the prevalence of the cognitive **verification strategy** (54% of respondents) over social (39% of respondents) and analytical (16% of respondents). The most closely related are cognitive and analytical strategy (34% of respondents), cognitive and social strategies (29% of respondents). Sex differences in the use of strategies have not been established. It is concluded that it is necessary to further study the content of information **verification strategies**, identify the role of internal mechanisms that ensure their formation, as well as assess the effectiveness of strategies in distinguishing between signs of **disinformation**.

1. Be suspicious of accounts with no identifiable info
2. Look for trends/patterns
3. Names are vital to an investigation
4. If you find something unexpected, it is probably worth investigating further
5. Follow clues
6. Historic data often provides new leads... targets' bad OPSEC does, too :)
7. Political neutrality during an investigation is important
8. Be supportive of your team- OSINT and mental health



# Thank You

Learn more at [nisos.com](https://www.nisos.com)

