

# Aero Continente founder drugs claim

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Peruvian flag carrier Aero Continente's founder Fernando Zevallos Gonzalez has been named as a drug kingpin by the US government.

The airline has had all its assets blocked from the US during a Treasury investigation into possible involvement with the drugs trade.

Aero Continente has not flown to the US since April, when it was blocked by the Federal Aviation Administration on safety grounds from continuing to serve Miami from its hub in Lima. However, it is now illegal for any US citizen or resident to fly on the airline, according to the US State Department.

Zevallos Gonzalez, who pleaded not guilty in court in Lima in June to charges of involvement with the cocaine trade, has demanded a trial in a US court to clear his name.

Under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act, the US president can name any foreign subject or company as a narcotics kingpin, freezing any assets they hold in the US. The only avenue of appeal is through the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control, or through the US courts if, as Aero Continente does, the company has a US presence.

Lupe Zevallos Gonzalez, Aero Continente's president, and commercial director Milagros Zevallos Gonzalez were also named in the investigation and have had all their assets blocked from the US.

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