



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

9.3.2015

B8-0245/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Venezuela
(2015/2582(RSP))

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on behalf of the EFDD Group

B8-0245/2015

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Venezuela
(2015/2582(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Venezuela is a party,
 - having regard to the statements of 28 March and 15 April 2014 of the Spokesperson of former Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Catherine Ashton on the start of a dialogue in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the UN Committee against Torture’s Concluding Observations on Venezuela of 24 November 2014,
 - having regard to the statement of 24 February 2015 of the Spokesperson of VP/HR Federica Mogherini on the arrest of Caracas Mayor Antonio Ledezma and the situation in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the communication by the Secretary-General of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the former president of Colombia, Ernest Samper, on the situation in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the statement of 20 October 2014 by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas levels of violence, including political violence, are high in Venezuela;
- B. whereas Kluivert Roa, a 14-year-old teenager who, according to his father, was a casual bystander, neither in favour of nor against the government, was fatally shot in the head on 24 February 2015 during demonstrations in the city of San Cristóbal in the west of Venezuela;
- C. whereas the recent arrest and detention of the Mayor of Caracas and leader of the opposition, Antonio Ledezma, is a source of alarm, as are reports of alleged intimidation and mistreatment of other imprisoned opposition leaders and students who participated in last year’s protests; whereas the overall situation risks further exacerbating the already tense situation in the country;
- D. whereas the rising political polarisation, economic crisis and product shortages in

Venezuela are of utmost concern, and seriously call into question the stability of the country with respect to securing a peaceful future;

- E. whereas President Nicolas Maduro has declared that since his election in 2013, there have been five assassination attempts against him and more than a dozen acts of sabotage and conspiracy;
- F. whereas Venezuela is the world's fifth largest oil-exporting country and has the world's largest proven oil reserves;
- G. whereas the Venezuelan economic model, which involves redistribution and investment in social programmes, is still largely dependent on oil revenues;
- H. whereas the current wave of subversive violence is happening at a time when the Venezuelan authorities are intensifying measures to combat the various forms of speculation and economic warfare that are affecting the country;
- I. whereas legitimate demands for change have to be fulfilled through a peaceful debate involving all of the political, civil society and other actors concerned;
- J. whereas freedom of expression and the right to take part in peaceful demonstrations are the cornerstones of democracy; whereas equality and justice for all are impossible without respect of the fundamental freedoms and rights of every citizen;
- K. whereas only respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and a constructive and respectful dialogue, conducted in the spirit of tolerance, can help the country to emerge from this serious crisis and overcome future difficulties;
- L. whereas any arrests, and in particular the arrest of an elected civil servant, must be underpinned by a clear judicial order, be based on verifiable accusations and be followed by a fair trial; whereas the presumption of innocence is indispensable for a due legal process;
- M. whereas a democratic state must not criminalise the leaders of the political opposition, and thus must guarantee the participation of all sectors in the political life of the country and ensure the protection of the human rights of those who declare themselves part of the opposition;
- N. whereas the allegation of the preparation of a *coup d'état* – the so called *Operación Jericó* – constitutes a very serious accusation, and the competent authorities of all states concerned have an obligation to clarify and thwart it;
- O. whereas UNASUR is the most relevant regional organisation to have followed the evolution of the situation in Venezuela and has announced that it will send a mission comprising the foreign ministers of Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador to the country, followed by an extraordinary session of the Foreign Ministers of UNASUR;
- 1. Condemns the acts of violence which have taken place during demonstrations and, in particular, the resulting loss of lives; expresses its condolences to the family of Kluivert

Roa, the 14-year-old teenager killed on 24 February 2015;

2. Notes that following Kluivert Roa's death, a member of the police force was charged by the prosecutor with intentional homicide and has called for due process; notes that members of the Venezuelan Government have condemned the killing; underlines the fact that fatal arms should never be used by security forces to control public demonstrations;
3. Calls on the Venezuelan authorities to ensure that accusations be investigated swiftly and impartially, with full respect for the principle of presumption of innocence and fair trial;
4. Recalls that it is essential that freedom of expression and fundamental rights be respected, in particular in a year during which legislative elections are due to take place in Venezuela;
5. Calls for an end to be put to violence and encourages dialogue across the entire political spectrum to guarantee public safety and protection, together with a return to peace and normality;
6. Calls for a swift and impartial investigation into all unsolved cases, and in particular with respect to the accusations brought against the mayor of Caracas; asks for his immediate release if no formal accusation is made legally by the prosecutors, and also if allegations turn out to be unfounded, or if charges are not confirmed in an impartial trial and in full respect of the rule of law;
7. Calls on the Venezuelan Government to work with all political parties and civil society actors to overcome the difficult situation in the country and meet the legitimate concerns of the people of Venezuela;
8. Welcomes initiatives by UNASUR and Venezuela's regional partners to support and promote mediation in the country;
9. Calls on the Venezuelan authorities to ensure that armed groups surrender their weapons immediately and to disband such groups, thereby ending their impunity, and to demand information concerning crimes committed; calls on the Venezuelan authorities to release all prisoners who have been detained arbitrarily, including students, opposition leaders, journalists and peaceful protesters;
10. Demands that all crimes in the context of the violent acts committed be fully investigated, and that the perpetrators be brought before the courts and punished accordingly; calls on the Venezuelan authorities to ensure due process during all trials, in accordance with international standards;
11. Calls on the representatives of all parties and members of Venezuelan society to remain peaceful and calm in both actions and words;
12. Reminds the Government of Venezuela that freedom of expression and the right to participate in peaceful demonstrations are fundamental human rights in any democracy,

as recognised under the Venezuelan Constitution;

13. Welcomes all efforts to bring all the parties to the table, as a continued and frank dialogue represents an important step towards addressing the legitimate concerns of the people of Venezuela; calls on the national government, leaders of the opposition, students and Venezuelan civil society to initiate an inclusive dialogue, to work together to immediately stop all forms of violence and to come to a consensus in order to overcome the current situation;
14. Reminds the Government of Venezuela of its obligation to ensure the security of all citizens in the country, regardless of their political views and affiliations; recalls that respect for the principle of the separation of powers is fundamental to democracy;
15. Calls on the Venezuelan authorities to immediately disarm and dissolve the uncontrolled armed groups that have a pro-government character and to put an end to the impunity thereof; calls for clarification regarding the deaths that have occurred so that the perpetrators can be held accountable for their actions;
16. Encourages all parties, and in particular the Venezuelan authorities, to pursue peaceful dialogue, reaching out to all sections of Venezuelan society in order to define points of convergence and to allow political actors to discuss the most serious problems which the country is facing;
17. Recalls the importance of Venezuela's role in the creation and strengthening of a cooperation and integration process for the benefit of the peoples of Latin America;
18. Finds regrettable the existence of media and web censorship and the fact that access to some blogs and social networks is limited; recalls that respect for political pluralism, freedom of expression and opinion, the protection of journalists and a free and independent media sector are fundamental elements of a democratic political process;
19. Recalls the importance of respecting basic human rights and the freedom of expression in all circumstances, and encourages all actors in Venezuelan society to aim at achieving concrete results;
20. Recalls that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and urges all national and international media outlets to present the situation in an objective manner with an impartial position and to act responsibly by covering the events in a fair, accurate and balanced manner;
21. Recalls that Article 58 of the Constitution of Venezuela explicitly prohibits censorship of the media; expects responsible journalism on behalf of the media, condemns all media-led instigations of violence and asks the media to refrain from such actions in the future;
22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the

Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly.