



---

*Plenary sitting*

---

**B8-0087/2018**

5.2.2018

## 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  
(2018/2559(RSP))

**Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Dita Charanzová, Nedzhmi Ali,  
Petras Auštrevičius, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Gérard Deprez,  
Marian Harkin, Filiz Hyusmenova, Ivan Jakovčić, Ilhan Kyuchyuk,  
Louis Michel, Javier Nart, Urmas Paet, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz,  
Jozo Radoš, Frédérique Ries, Marietje Schaake, Pavel Telička,  
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Ivo Vajgl, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen,  
Hilde Vautmans, Cecilia Wikström**  
on behalf of the ALDE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Venezuela  
(2018/2559(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its numerous resolutions on Venezuela, in particular those of 27 February 2014 on the situation in Venezuela<sup>1</sup>, of 18 December 2014 on the persecution of the democratic opposition in Venezuela<sup>2</sup>, of 12 March 2015 on the situation in Venezuela<sup>3</sup>, of 8 June 2016 on the situation in Venezuela<sup>4</sup> and of 27 April 2017 on the situation in Venezuela<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to the statement of 26 January 2018 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on the latest developments in Venezuela, condemning the decision by the Venezuelan authorities to expel the Ambassador of Spain in Caracas,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 13 November 2017 and 22 January 2018 on Venezuela, imposing an arms embargo and sanctions,
- 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 Inter-American Democratic Charter, adopted on 11 September 2001,
- having regard to the statement of 31 March 2017 by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, on the decision of the Venezuelan Supreme Court to take over the legislative powers of the National Assembly,
- having regard to the statement by the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) condemning the detention of Enrique Aristeguieta on 2 February 2018,
- having regard to the warnings contained in the reports of 30 May 2016 and 14 March 2017 by the Organisation of American States (OAS) on Venezuela, and to the calls by the Secretary-General of the OAS for the urgent convocation of its Permanent Council under Article 20 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter to discuss the political crisis in Venezuela,
- having regard to the letter of the VP/HR of 27 March 2017 on the worsening and severe political, economic and humanitarian crises in Venezuela,

---

<sup>1</sup> OJ C 285, 29.8.2017, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 294, 12.8.2016, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2015)0080.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0269.

<sup>5</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0200.

- having regard to the OAS declaration signed by 14 of its member states on 13 March 2017 demanding that Venezuela promptly schedule elections, release political prisoners and recognise its constitution’s separation of powers, among other measures,
  - having regard to the resolution of the OAS Permanent Council of 3 April 2017 on the recent events in Venezuela,
  - having regard to the report published by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in August 2017 entitled ‘Human rights violations and abuses in the context of protests in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela from 1 April to 31 July 2017’,
  - having regard to the declarations of the Lima Group of 8 August 2017 on the non-recognition of the National Constituent Assembly and of 23 January 2018 on the decision of the National Constituent Assembly to hold presidential elections,
  - having regard to the decision of the European Parliament to award the 2017 Sakharov Prize to the democratic opposition in Venezuela,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 22 January 2018 the illegitimate National Constituent Assembly, which is recognised neither internationally nor by the EU, called for presidential elections to be held by 30 April 2018, several months ahead of when those elections would traditionally have taken place; whereas according to the Venezuelan Constitution the National Electoral Council is the body responsible for convoking elections;
  - B. whereas this decision was taken outside the scope of the national dialogue and irrespective of any possible advances that might be achieved between Venezuela’s government and opposition in the fifth round of talks in Santo Domingo, which began on 29 January 2018; whereas this call for elections runs counter to both democratic principles and good faith as regards dialogue between the government and the opposition;
  - C. whereas in the last months the government of Nicolás Maduro has adopted a number of measures aimed at preventing any elections being held with sufficient democratic guarantees; whereas on 25 January 2018 the Supreme Court decided to exclude the opposition coalition MUD (Mesa de la Unidad Democrática) from the presidential elections; whereas on 4 February 2018, in a non-constitutional move, the National Electoral Council excluded the Primero Justicia party from the electoral process; whereas the constant crackdown on the opposition, the arbitrary imprisonment of many opposition figures and the barring of many others from running, and the lack of separation of powers undermine the credibility of the elections while further escalating an already volatile situation;
  - D. whereas the situation of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela continues to deteriorate; whereas given the gravity of the political, economic, social and humanitarian situation, holding free and fair elections with all appropriate guarantees and allowing an adequate amount of time to prepare them are fundamental for a start to be made on resolving the many problems Venezuela faces;

- E. whereas on 2 February 2018 Enrique Aristeguita Gramcko was kidnapped from his home in Caracas at three in the morning by the intelligence services, with no information given about his whereabouts; whereas this is sadly just one recent example of many cases of arbitrary detention of those opposing the regime;
  - F. whereas helicopter pilot Óscar Pérez was among seven people killed in a nine-hour siege conducted by government security forces on 15 January 2018; whereas he and the others had attempted to surrender during this siege;
  - G. whereas the National Electoral Council, the body that will organise the next presidential elections, has a record of manipulation and its credibility now stands at zero following its falsification of the participation rate and the results of the last elections;
  - H. whereas the Venezuelan government constantly refuses to receive and facilitate the distribution of international humanitarian aid, despite the increase in child malnutrition and the food and medicine shortages resulting in many hundreds of deaths;
  - I. whereas, having decided on 13 November 2017 to adopt an embargo against Venezuela on arms and on related material that might be used for internal repression, on 22 January 2018 the Council of the European Union decided unanimously to impose sanctions against Venezuela affecting seven individuals holding official positions, by means of restrictive measures including a travel ban and an asset freeze, on grounds of non-respect of democratic principles and of the rule of law and democracy;
  - J. whereas on 5 January 2018 the government of President Maduro closed Venezuela's air and maritime borders with the three Caribbean islands Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao; whereas Venezuelans have been seeking to buy food and essential supplies on the Caribbean islands owing to severe shortages at home;
  - K. whereas following the adoption of EU sanctions, Venezuela expelled the Spanish ambassador to Caracas and proclaimed him 'persona non grata', accusing Spain of interfering in its internal affairs; whereas the EU firmly condemned this decision while also pointing out the unanimous nature of its decisions in the area of foreign policy, including the imposition of sanctions;
- 1. Expresses its grave concern at the continued unconstitutional violation of democratic order and human rights in Venezuela; strongly rejects the decision by the illegitimate National Constituent Assembly, which is recognised neither internationally nor by the EU, to call for early presidential elections by the end of April 2018; deeply deplores the measures adopted by the Maduro government and the Supreme Court preventing opposition members from the MUD coalition from running in the upcoming elections; calls on the Venezuelan authorities to fully restore their eligibility rights;
  - 2. Supports the statement by the VP/HR that only elections that are based on a viable electoral calendar, agreed in the context of the national dialogue with all relevant actors and political parties, respecting equal, fair and transparent conditions of participation, including the lifting of bans on opposition figures, without political prisoners and ensuring that the National Electoral Council is balanced in composition and impartial, and with the existence of sufficient guarantees including independent international observation, will be recognised by the EU and can avoid further polarisation;

3. States that under the current circumstances, the European Parliament will not recognise the elections or the authorities resulting from any illegitimate electoral process;
4. Welcomes the imposition of an arms embargo and of sanctions against seven Venezuelan officials in response to the grave breaches of human rights and democracy in the country; recalls that all EU decisions in the area of foreign policy, including imposing sanctions, are taken by unanimity; stresses that the extension of the sanctions list to other Venezuelan officials and their family members should be promptly explored and adopted; calls on the Council to consider sanctions on Venezuelan oil, including on dealings with the state-owned company PDVSA;
5. Calls on the Venezuelan government to re-establish the separation and independence of powers and to restore full constitutional authority to the National Assembly; reiterates its full support for the National Assembly as the sole legally constituted and recognised parliament in Venezuela; rejects any decisions taken by the National Constituent Assembly as being in breach of all democratic standards and rules;
6. Calls on the Venezuelan government to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners; fully supports the opening of investigations by the International Criminal Court (ICC) into the extensive and systematic crimes against humanity and acts of repression perpetrated by the Venezuelan regime; calls for those investigations to be opened as soon as possible, and calls for the EU to play an active role in this regard;
7. Expresses its grave concern at the seriously deteriorating situation as regards democracy, human rights and the socio-economic situation in Venezuela; calls on the Venezuelan authorities to allow unimpeded humanitarian aid into the country as a matter of urgency, and to grant access to the international organisations that wish to assist; urges the authorities to give their formal consent to the agreement reached during the talks held in Aruba on 12 January 2018, so that the borders between Venezuela and the three Caribbean islands can be reopened;
8. Reiterates its urgent request for a European Parliament delegation to be sent to Venezuela in order to hold a dialogue with all sectors involved in the conflict as soon as possible;
9. 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 Government and National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States.