



Plenary sitting

B8-0724/2016

1.6.2016

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
(2016/2699(RSP))

Charles Tannock, Mark Demesmaecker, Andrew Lewer, Ashley Fox, Angel Dzhambazki
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Venezuela
(2016/2699(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Venezuela, in particular those of 27 February 2014 on the situation in Venezuela¹, 18 December 2014 on the persecution of the democratic opposition in Venezuela² and 12 March 2015 on the situation in Venezuela³,
 - having regard to the statement of 10 May 2016 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on the situation in 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 letter of the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States of 18 May 2016,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas both the Venezuelan Government and the Venezuelan Supreme Court have been hindering the legislative powers of the National Assembly inaugurated in December 2015, with the democratic opposition in the majority, thus imperilling the balance of power required in a state governed by the rule of law;
- B. whereas decisions such as those issuing and confirming the State of Exception and Economic Emergency Decree, removing the National Assembly's powers to scrutinise policy, refusing to recognise the power conferred on the National Assembly by the constitution to revoke the appointment of Supreme Court judges, declaring the reform of the Central Bank of Venezuela Law unconstitutional and suspending the articles of the National Assembly's Internal Debate Rules were taken, among others, in contravention of the legislative powers of the National Assembly, with no respect for the balance of power essential in a state governed by the rule of law;
- C. whereas on 29 March 2016 the National Assembly passed the Amnesty and National Reconciliation Law with a view to freeing political prisoners, most of whom were incarcerated without standing trial or being convicted, and whereas on 11 April 2016 the Supreme Court declared that law unconstitutional;
- D. whereas the Venezuelan Government has complete control over the country's judiciary

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0176.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0106.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0080.

and the electoral commission, in clear breach of the principle of the independence and separation of powers that is characteristic of democratic states governed by the rule of law;

- E. whereas the democratic opposition has started a constitutionally recognised process that enables public officials to be removed from office after having completed 50 % of their term, and has collected and delivered to the National Electoral Council 1.8 million signatures, many more than the 198 000 required for the process to be constitutionally accepted;
 - F. whereas Luis Almagro, the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States, has urged the President of Venezuela to stop subverting the opposition-run parliament, to release ‘the people you hold prisoner for their ideas’ and to allow the recall referendum to take place this year;
 - G. whereas the political clashes are occurring against a backdrop of increasing economic uncertainty for most Venezuelans, who are suffering from shortages of basic foods and medicines, failing hospitals, water and power shortages, massive corruption and soaring inflation, as well as increasing (political) violence;
1. Expresses its deep concern about the serious deterioration of the rule of law, democracy and the socio-economic situation in Venezuela;
 2. Strongly condemns the use of state powers, in particular those of the judiciary and the National Electoral Council, to distort and disregard legislation lawfully adopted by Venezuela’s parliament, the National Assembly, thereby undermining the will of the Venezuelan people expressed at the elections of 6 December 2015;
 3. Calls on the Venezuelan Government to respect the rule of law, human rights, including the right to peaceful demonstrations, and the principle of the separation of powers that are characteristic of democracies;
 4. Urges the Venezuelan Government to immediately release all political prisoners;
 5. Urges the government and public authorities of Venezuela to respect the constitution, including the legal and recognised mechanisms and procedures for activating the process laid down in the Venezuelan constitution for impeaching the president before the end of 2016;
 6. Urges all parties concerned to overcome Venezuela’s current critical situation through a constitutional, peaceful and democratic solution based on dialogue;
 7. Urges the VP/HR to cooperate with Latin American countries and regional and international organisations to ensure that mechanisms for dialogue, national reconciliation and mediation are put in place in Venezuela in order to support a peaceful, democratic and constitutional solution to the crisis the country is currently experiencing;
 8. 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.