



Plenary sitting

B9-0062/2021

18.1.2021

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 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the latest developments in the National Assembly of Venezuela (2021/2508(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the latest developments in the National Assembly of Venezuela
(2021/2508(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela, in particular those of 10 July 2020 on the humanitarian situation in Venezuela and the migration and refugee crisis¹, of 16 January 2020 on the situation in Venezuela after the illegal election of the new National Assembly Presidency and Bureau (parliamentary coup)² and of 18 July 2019 on the situation in Venezuela³,
 - having regard to the declarations of 6 January 2021 and 7 December 2020 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on behalf of the EU on the elections for the Venezuelan National Assembly,
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2017/2063 of 13 November 2017 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Venezuela⁴ and the extension of its applicability until November 2021,
 - having regard to the statements of the International Contact Group on Venezuela of 8 December 2020 and 17 September 2020,
 - having regard to the statements of the Lima Group of 5 January 2021 and 13 October 2020,
 - having regard to the report of the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of 16 September 2020,
 - having regard to the statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of 2 July 2020 at the 44th Session of the UN Human Rights Council,
 - having regard to the report of the International Criminal Court entitled ‘Preliminary Examination Activities (2020) – Venezuela I’ of 14 December 2020,
 - having regard to the Venezuelan Constitution,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the elections to the Venezuelan National Assembly held on 6 December 2020 did not meet internationally accepted conditions as called for by the EU, the

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0193.

² Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0013.

³ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2019)0007.

⁴ OJ L 295, 14.11.2017, p. 21.

International Contact Group on Venezuela, the Lima Group and many other international actors; whereas the elections also failed to meet the conditions required by Venezuelan laws;

- B. whereas the Great Patriotic Pole (*Gran Polo Patriótico Simón Bolívar*), a coalition of pro-government political parties led by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), won the elections to the National Assembly held on 6 December 2020, obtaining 68.4 % of the vote and winning 240 of the 277 seats; whereas non-government parties obtained around 30 % of the vote and 20 seats (7 % of the total number); whereas the poll was marked by a historically low voter turnout of just 30.5 %;
- C. whereas a majority of the opposition parties did not participate in the elections owing to a lack of guarantees; whereas under these circumstances, neither the EU nor other international actors have recognised the results of this electoral process as legitimate or representative of the will of the Venezuelan people;
- D. whereas the main opposition parties called for a national referendum – *Consulta Popular* – held between 7 and 12 December 2020; whereas according to certain organisations, nearly 6.5 million Venezuelans participated in this consultation, amounting to 31.2 % of total turnout – slightly higher than participation in the parliamentary elections; whereas these results cannot be verified as there was no external observation;
- E. whereas COVID-19 has further exacerbated the already critical situation in Venezuela; whereas according to the World Health Organization, by 13 January 2021 Venezuela had reported 116 983 cases and 1 073 deaths; whereas it is likely that these figures are underreported; whereas the collapse of the health system, hyperinflation, severe food and medicine shortages and a dire humanitarian crisis have forced around at least one sixth of the population to leave the country, with over five and a half million Venezuelans having left by the end of 2020;
- F. whereas the UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela published its report on 16 September 2020; whereas the report established grounds to believe that the Venezuelan authorities and security forces have planned and executed serious human rights violations since 2014, including arbitrary killings, extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture, and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment which could amount to crimes against humanity;
- G. whereas in October 2020, the National Constituent Assembly adopted the Anti-Blockade Law, which is designed to waive any legal or regulatory restrictions deemed necessary by the Assembly to circumvent sanctions and waive restrictions and parliamentary scrutiny on the export of minerals and other strategic goods; whereas according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, people working in the Arco Minero del Orinoco region of Venezuela are caught up in a context of labour exploitation and high levels of violence by criminal groups that control the mines in the area;
- H. whereas on 12 November 2020, the Council extended the restrictive measures against Venezuela until 14 November 2021; whereas these measures include an embargo on

arms and on equipment for internal repression, as well as a travel ban and asset freezes on 36 Venezuelan leaders and top officials;

- I. whereas the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has made repeated calls for the lifting of economic sanctions against Venezuela, such as sanctions on diesel exports, in order to facilitate the allocation of resources during the pandemic; whereas the economic sanctions imposed by the US have exacerbated the effects of this dire crisis and, by extension, the humanitarian situation, bearing in mind that most foreign exchange earnings are derived from oil exports, many of which are linked to the US market;
- J. whereas in December 2020, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court concluded their preliminary subject-matter assessment and determined that there was a reasonable basis to believe that crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court have occurred in Venezuela; whereas a final decision will be taken on the matter in the first half of 2021;
- K. whereas since 2014, the Venezuelan opposition has been intensifying its efforts to bring about a change in government; whereas opposition has taken many forms encompassing political, civil, diplomatic and military action; whereas Operation Freedom in April 2019 and Operation Gideon in May 2020 sought to launch a military-backed effort to oust President Maduro; whereas these actions do not serve to build trust among the stakeholders;
- L. whereas claims of corruption and mishandling uncovered multiple proposed deals involving the outgoing leadership of the National Assembly; whereas the allegations include a prospective contract with the Government of Paraguay concerning a USD 26 million commission to be paid to third parties and another failed deal to recover assets from a British bank;
- M. whereas 80.3 % of the requirements committed under the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Response Plan for Venezuela in 2020 were unmet (just USD 150.6 million vs. the USD 762.5 million committed); whereas a total of EUR 2.544 billion was pledged as a result of the International Donors Conference in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants held in May 2020; whereas no public information is available yet on the amounts effectively disbursed by states or regional organisations; whereas the Team Europe support package includes EUR 6 million for Venezuela and additional funds for aid at sub-regional level; whereas on 10 December 2020, the International Organization for Migration and the UNHCR launched an appeal for a pledge of USD 1.4 billion in 2021 in order to respond to the needs of Venezuelan refugees and the migrant crisis;
- 1. Expresses its solidarity with and full support to the people of Venezuela who are suffering the effects of a severe humanitarian and political crisis, which is currently being exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; calls for the lifting of the widespread economic sanctions against Venezuela, which are having a direct impact on the population and hampering the fight against the pandemic, including the delivery of essential equipment and supplies needed to fight the coronavirus and limit its spread worldwide;

2. Remains convinced that a peaceful, political and democratic solution is the only sustainable way out of the Venezuelan crisis and recalls that violence, including any military or violent incursion in the country, is not an option;
3. Regrets the fact that the Venezuelan elections for the National Assembly held on 6 December 2020 went ahead without a national agreement on the electoral conditions;
4. Points out that the elections failed to comply with the international standards for a credible process and failed to mobilise the Venezuelan people to participate; recalls that the lack of political pluralism and the way in which the elections were planned and executed, including the disqualification of opposition leaders, did not allow the EU to recognise the electoral process as credible, inclusive or transparent, and did not allow the outcome of the elections to be considered representative of the democratic will of the Venezuelan people;
5. Deeply regrets the fact that the National Assembly took up its mandate on 5 January 2021 on the basis of these undemocratic elections;
6. Reaffirms its position that a sustainable solution to the profound crisis in Venezuela must be found in order to end the current impasse through inclusive dialogue and negotiations that lead to credible, inclusive and democratic processes, including local, presidential and legislative elections under international observation, a fully independent National Electoral Council and Supreme Court, full freedom of the press, and political participation for all Venezuelans;
7. Calls for the EU to maintain its engagement with all political and civil society actors striving to restore democracy to Venezuela, notably Juan Guaidó and other representatives of the outgoing National Assembly elected in 2015 – the last time that Venezuelans were able to freely participate in an electoral process;
8. Reiterates the obligation to fully guarantee respect for and the protection of human rights in Venezuela and undertakes to be particularly vigilant with regard to any acts of repression, in particular against members of the opposition;
9. Calls on the Venezuelan authorities and leaders to prioritise the interests of the Venezuelan people and to urgently come together to start a Venezuelan-led transition process in order to find a peaceful, inclusive and sustainable solution to the political crisis; recalls that the EU stands ready to support such a process and to take additional targeted measures;
10. Acknowledges that the EU is the only international actor that can serve as an interlocutor for all Venezuelans; expresses its strong support for the VP/HR in his crucial role as mediator; calls on the European External Action Service and the Commission to speak with one unique voice and to forge a consensus with UN Security Council members to ensure their backing for a long-term settlement of the crisis;
11. Recalls that the crisis in Venezuela is the most underfinanced in the world and calls on the international community to honour its financial commitments and disburse the amounts committed for the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela;

12. Stresses the need to utilise foreign-based Venezuelan assets and resources to combat the profound humanitarian crisis the country is facing, and to do so under the auspices of the UN;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Lima Group, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States.