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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0107/2024**

5.2.2024

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on further repression against the democratic forces in Venezuela: attack on  
presidential candidate Maria Corina Machado  
(2024/2549(RSP))

**Jordi Cañas, Dita Charanzová, José Ramón Bauzá Díaz, Malik Azmani,  
Katalin Cseh, Olivier Chastel, Petras Auštrevičius, Izaskun Bilbao  
Barandica, Nicola Danti, Karin Karlsbro, Michael Kauch, Ilhan  
Kyuchyuk, Karen Melchior, Javier Nart, Urmas Paet, Dragoș Pîslaru,  
Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Dragoș Tudorache**  
on behalf of the Renew Group

**European Parliament resolution on further repression against the democratic forces in Venezuela: attack on presidential candidate Maria Corina Machado (2024/2549(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela,
  - having regard to the statement by the Spokesperson of the European External Action Service of 29 January 2024 on banning opposition politicians,
  - having regard to the Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All, signed by the Maduro government and the Venezuelan opposition alliance, the Unitary Platform, in October 2023 (Barbados Agreement),
  - having regard to the final report of the EU Election Observation Mission to Venezuela of 22 February 2022 entitled ‘Regional and municipal elections 21 November 2021’ and the statement by the President of the Electoral Observation Delegation of the European Parliament, Jordi Cañas, of 23 November 2021 on the regional and local elections in Venezuela in 2021,
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in the Barbados Agreement, the parties committed to recognise and respect the right of each political actor to choose their candidate for the presidential elections freely and in line with their internal mechanisms;
- B. whereas in October 2023, the opposition candidate Maria Corina Machado won the presidential primary for the Unitary Platform with 92.35 % of the votes;
- C. whereas on 26 January 2024, the Supreme Court of Venezuela upheld the arbitrary ban that prevents presidential candidate Maria Corina Machado from holding office and registering her candidacy for the presidential elections expected to take place in the second half of 2024;
- D. whereas the Maduro regime has disqualified several other opposition politicians throughout the years to prevent political change, including Henrique Capriles, who has run for president twice in the past and whose disqualification was also confirmed in the same Supreme Court ruling;
- E. whereas the administrative authorities’ ongoing arbitrary disqualification of opposition electoral candidates severely restrict the right of Venezuelans to choose their representatives;
- F. whereas prior to the confirmed disqualification of Maria Corina Machado, the regime tirelessly hounded members of her party and campaign team and other political opponents and criminalised the work of lawyers and human rights defenders;

- G. whereas on 6 December 2023, Roberto Abdul, a member of the commission that planned the opposition primaries, was arrested for alleged treason; whereas at the same time, arrest warrants were issued for Henry Alviarez, Claudia Macero and Pedro Urruchurtu, members of the Vente Venezuela party, for alleged crimes including treason, conspiracy and money laundering;
- H. whereas on 23 January 2024, Maria Corina Machado made a call during a public rally for the electoral calendar to be established; whereas on the same day, three political regional coordinators of her political party Vente Venezuela, Guillermo López, Luis Camacaro and Juan Freites, were detained and have since been reported missing;
- I. whereas on January 22, 14 arrest warrants were issued against civilians and former military personnel in exile for allegedly conspiring against the government, including human rights activist and lawyer Tamara Sujú and journalist Sebastiana Barráez;
- J. whereas the Venezuelan Parliament, which is controlled by the Maduro regime, has been preparing a new law on the financing and performance of non-governmental organisations in order to limit civil society's ability to get organised and defend their rights;
- K. whereas on 31 January, Maduro backed a call from the regime-controlled National Assembly to develop a proposal, starting from 5 February and in dialogue with various sectors, for an electoral schedule for the presidential elections, expected in the second half of 2024, but still without a definite date;
- L. whereas the Barbados Agreement remains the most viable mechanism to resolve Venezuela's long-standing political, economic and humanitarian crises and to conduct competitive, free and inclusive elections in Venezuela;
- M. whereas the 2024 presidential elections have the potential to mark a turning point from corrupt autocracy towards a return to democracy, if all the points in the Barbados Agreement are respected;
- N. whereas the regime has also been making changes to the National Electoral Council to hamper the electoral process and quash any prospect of a return to democracy; whereas in June 2023, three principal rectors of the National Electoral Council stepped down, forcing the resignation of the two remaining rectors; whereas the regime-controlled National Assembly appointed a special commission composed of representatives of the regime, including the wife of Nicolás Maduro, to elect the new rectors;
- O. whereas Venezuela is experiencing institutional, economic and political instability; whereas according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 7.7 million people have been forced to leave and more could follow;
1. Strongly condemns the Venezuelan Supreme Court's arbitrary, unconstitutional and politically motivated decision to disqualify Maria Corina Machado, the winner of the democratic opposition's primary, and ban her from participating in the presidential elections; recalls that the process to reinstate her lacked basic elements, as she neither received a copy of the allegations against her nor was afforded the opportunity to respond to the allegations;

2. Strongly condemns the attacks against, alleged forced disappearances and arrests of and arrest warrants issued for members of her team and other representatives of the opposition and civil society, as well as human rights defenders and journalists; strongly condemns the Maduro regime's interference in the electoral process;
3. Reiterates that actions by Nicolás Maduro and his representatives, including the persecution of members of the democratic opposition and the barring of candidates from competing in this year's presidential election, are inconsistent with the Barbados Agreement, signed by representatives of Nicolás Maduro's government and the Unitary Platform, with a view to holding a competitive Venezuelan presidential election in 2024;
4. Urges the Venezuelan regime to revoke the bans on holding office that it imposed on the opposition primary winner and thus fully legitimate candidate Maria Corina Machado and other opposition politicians, and to start implementing the Barbados Agreement, including by upholding the electoral roadmap's principles and paragraph one of the agreement, which outlines that the parties are bound to 'recognise and respect the right of each political actor to choose their candidate for the presidential elections freely', which would entail ensuring that opposition leader Maria Corina Machado can participate freely in a competitive and truly democratic presidential election in 2024;
5. Urges the Venezuelan regime to immediately stop persecuting, repressing and violating the civil and political rights of its political opponents and the Venezuelan people, as well as to revoke the arrest warrants for political opponents and to free political prisoners;
6. Notes the importance of allowing all Venezuelans, both in Venezuela and abroad, to participate in the elections by updating the permanent electoral registry and the electoral registry abroad, as provided for in paragraph 3(2)(e) of the Barbados Agreement;
7. Insists that the EU must not consider sending any electoral observation mission to Venezuela until there are clear and credible guarantees that the Barbados Agreement and the electoral roadmap are being respected in their entirety, until opposition politicians who have been disqualified from holding public office are reinstated, until Maria Corina Machado is allowed to participate in the elections, and until the EU Election Observation Mission's 2021 recommendations are properly implemented; notes that it will obviously not recognise elections and election results if these conditions are not respected;
8. Remains strongly committed to supporting dialogue between the parties and to the Venezuelan people's aspirations for a democratic future;
9. Calls on the Council to maintain the EU's sanctions on the Maduro regime and to further expand their scope to include the Venezuelan Supreme Court judges who signed the decision to ban Maria Corina Machado from holding public office and the members of the Venezuelan security forces involved in the systematic abuses perpetuated against government opponents;
10. Calls for the EU to work with the international community and all peaceful democratic stakeholders across the political spectrum in Venezuela and to leverage all mechanisms

at its disposal to encourage a return to the principles in the Barbados Agreement;

11. Calls on the European External Action Service and the EU Delegation in Venezuela to continue monitoring the situation in the country and to play a more assertive and visible role;
12. Fully supports the International Criminal Court's investigations into the Venezuelan regime's extensive crimes and acts of repression and calls for the EU to support the investigations into the alleged crimes against humanity and to hold those responsible to account;
13. Calls on the international community to continue to support the return of democracy in Venezuela;
14. 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 participants of the EU-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States Summit, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, the Organization of American States and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.