



Plenary sitting

**B9-0211/2020 }
B9-0213/2020 }
B9-0215/2020 } RC1**

7.7.2020

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 132(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the following motions:

B9-0211/2020 (PPE)

B9-0213/2020 (S&D)

B9-0215/2020 (Renew)

on the humanitarian situation in Venezuela and the migration and refugee crisis
(2019/2952(RSP))

Dolors Montserrat, Esteban González Pons, Leopoldo López Gil, Paulo Rangel, Antonio Tajani, David McAllister, Gabriel Mato, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Miriam Lexmann, Vladimír Bilčík, Ivan Štefanec, Michal Wiezik, Peter Pollák

on behalf of the PPE Group

Kati Piri, Javi López, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques

on behalf of the S&D Group

Dita Charanzová, Jordi Cañas, Abir Al-Sahlani, Barry Andrews, Malik Azmani, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Sylvie Brunet, Olivier Chastel, Nicola Danti, Fredrick Federley, Billy Kelleher, Moritz Körner, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Dragoş Pîslaru, Samira Rafaela, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Nicolae Ştefănuţă, Ramona Strugariu, Dragoş Tudorache, Hilde Vautmans

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on behalf of the Renew Group

**European Parliament resolution on the humanitarian situation in Venezuela and the migration and refugee crisis
(2019/2952(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela, in particular that of 16 January 2020 on the situation in Venezuela after the illegal election of the new National Assembly Presidency and Bureau (parliamentary coup)¹,
- having regard to the statement by the spokesperson for the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) of 1 April 2020 on the US proposal and the situation in the context of the coronavirus pandemic in Venezuela,
- having regard to the statement by UN human rights experts of 30 April 2020 on the health emergency in Venezuela,
- having regard to the warning by UN human rights experts of 6 May 2020 about the devastating impact of the country's humanitarian and economic crisis on human rights,
- having regard to UN High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet's Human Rights Report on Venezuela of 2 July 2020,
- having regard to the joint press release of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) of 1 April 2020 on the situation of refugees and migrants from Venezuela during the COVID-19 crisis,
- having regard to the statement of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States on the situation in Venezuela of 5 January 2020 and of 26 June 2020,
- having regard to the Lima Group statements of 20 February, 2 March, 2 April and 16 June 2020,
- having regard to the declarations by the VP/HR of 4 and 16 June 2020 on the latest developments in Venezuela,
- having regard to the statement of its Committee on Foreign Affairs of 11 June 2020 on the recent attacks on Venezuela's National Assembly,
- having regard to the International Contact Group statements of 16 June 2020 on the undermined credibility of the Venezuelan electoral body and of 24 June 2020 on the worsening political crisis in Venezuela,
- having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/898 of 29 June 2020 amending Decision (CFSP) 2017/2074 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Venezuela², which added 11 leading Venezuelan officials to the list of those subject to

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0013.

² OJ L 205 I, 29.6.2020, p. 6.

restrictive measures,

- having regard to the International Donors Conference in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants of 26 May 2020,
 - having regard to the Venezuelan Constitution,
 - having regard to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the European Union and its Member States have been supporting the Venezuelan population and the communities hosting refugees for years; whereas on 26 May 2020, the European Union and the Government of Spain, with the support of the UNHCR and the IOM, convened an International Donors Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants; whereas international donors pledged a total of EUR 2.544 billion, of which only EUR 595 million are direct grants, the rest being simply conditional loans; whereas during the conference, some of the borrowers expressed concerns about the bureaucratic difficulties and the complexity of regulation they faced in obtaining the loans; whereas the EUR 595 million in direct grants will hardly cover the annual consequences of such an unprecedented crisis in Venezuela’s neighbouring countries; whereas the international community needs to find innovative solutions to unlock other possible financial resources to help the Venezuelan people address their emergency needs beyond humanitarian and longer-term cooperation aid;
- B. whereas the EU assistance amounts to over EUR 319 million, both within and outside Venezuela; whereas EUR 156 million have been devoted to humanitarian assistance, EUR 136 million to development and EUR 27 million to stability and peace;
- C. whereas the already dire political, economic, institutional, social and multidimensional humanitarian crisis in Venezuela has significantly worsened and become aggravated during the pandemic; whereas increased shortages of medicines and food, massive human rights violations, hyperinflation, political oppression, corruption and violence are endangering people’s lives and forcing them to flee the country;
- D. whereas a growing number of people in Venezuela, in particular vulnerable groups such as women, children and sick people, are suffering from malnutrition as a consequence of limited access to quality health services, medicines, food and water;
- E. whereas the Venezuelan national health system has been significantly weakened due to mishandling by the regime, resulting in critical shortages of medicines and a lack of available medical treatment; whereas the figures provided by the regime in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic lack credibility and are not trusted either within Venezuela or by the international community;
- F. whereas the current multidimensional crisis in Venezuela is generating the largest population displacement ever seen in the region; whereas around five million Venezuelans have fled the country, with 80 percent of them displaced in countries in the region; whereas according to the UNHCR, the Venezuelan refugee crisis is the second biggest in the world, behind that of Syria; whereas it is expected that by the end of

2020, the total number of people fleeing the worsening conditions in Venezuela could exceed 6.5 million;

- G. whereas according to the UNHCR, the number of Venezuelans seeking asylum worldwide has increased by 2 000 %; whereas 650 000 have filed asylum claims worldwide and around two million have obtained residence permits from other countries in the Americas; whereas 12 % of the population has fled the country and people continue to leave at an average rate of 5 000 per day;
- H. whereas the current global public health emergency has compounded an already desperate situation for many refugees and migrants from Venezuela, as well as their host countries; whereas many refugees and migrants depend on insufficient daily wages to cover basic needs such as shelter, food and healthcare;
- I. whereas according to the initial reports about the pandemic overwhelming the country's debilitated healthcare system, hospitals are filled with coronavirus patients and dozens of health workers have been infected;
- J. whereas the illegitimate Venezuelan Supreme Court, controlled by the regime of Nicolás Maduro, unjustifiably ratified the appointment of Luis Parra as President of the National Assembly on 26 May 2020; whereas the illegal session which took place in January 2020 respected neither legal procedure nor democratic constitutional principles by preventing, in some cases by force, the large majority of democratically elected representatives from being present during the session and consequently from casting their votes; whereas the illegal decision emanating from this illegitimate parliamentary session led the Council of the EU to impose sanctions on a further 11 officials for their role in undermining democracy and the rule of law, including Luis Parra and Juan Jose Mendoza, President of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court; whereas Juan Guaidó has excluded himself from any transitional government and Maduro cannot be part of such a government;
- K. whereas on 13 June 2020, the illegitimate Supreme Court once again appointed new members to the National Electoral Council), despite not having any legal power to do so; whereas, in accordance with Articles 187 and 296 of the Venezuelan Constitution, these appointments are the sole and exclusive responsibility of the National Assembly, a body democratically elected by the Venezuelan people; whereas the European Parliament will not recognise any decision or ruling that is unilaterally taken by these illegitimate bodies; whereas the officials responsible for these decisions have also been added to the EU's sanction list;
- L. whereas Nicolás Maduro ordered the European Union's ambassador to leave the country within 72 hours of the EU imposing targeted sanctions on several officials responsible for serious human rights breaches, and whereas he also threatened the ambassador of Spain with further reprisals; whereas in May 2020, there were reports of acts of harassment against the French embassy in Caracas, including by cutting off water and electricity supplies to the ambassador's residence; whereas the regime has decided to reverse that decision and not to expel the EU ambassador;
- M. whereas the Maduro regime has lashed out against the political parties Accion Democrática, Primero Justicia and Un Nuevo Tiempo, subjecting them to systematic

persecution through rulings of the illegitimate Supreme Court stripping them of their national directorates against the will of their members; whereas the democratic political party Voluntad Popular was classified as a terrorist organisation by the Maduro regime;

- N. whereas the democratic international community, including the EU, has firmly rejected this electoral farce and all such illegal actions; whereas this action has further reduced the democratic space in the country to the bare minimum and has created major obstacles to the resolution of the political crisis in Venezuela; whereas the formation of a balanced and inclusive national emergency government, comprising all democratic political and social sectors of the country and able to address current humanitarian needs, is essential in order to overcome the escalating crisis;
- O. whereas respecting international standards, an independent and balanced National Electoral Council and a level playing field ensuring the unimpeded participation of political parties and candidates represent the cornerstones of a credible electoral process, enabling free and fair legislative and presidential elections;
- P. whereas illicit financing and foreign interference from the regime in elections pose a significant threat to European democracies;
- Q. whereas the implementation of EU foreign affairs decisions is in hands of national authorities but the Commission has a responsibility to monitor the implementation of EU law;
- R. whereas on 12 June 2020, the authorities in Cape Verde arrested Alex Saab, a businessman who has been implicated in several corruption schemes involving the Maduro regime and is now awaiting a judicial decision and possible extradition; whereas the Saab case illustrates how pervasive corruption has become in Venezuela while the country is in the midst of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis; whereas the country ranked 173rd out of 180 in Transparency International's 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index;
- S. whereas the number of political prisoners has increased since mass civil unrest began in 2014, and currently stands at more than 430; whereas 11 Europeans are also reportedly being detained in Venezuela; whereas many accounts of torture by the regime are currently under preliminary examination by the ICC for crimes against humanity; whereas repression, arbitrary detentions and torture have increased during the COVID-19 crisis; whereas High Commissioner Bachelet's report on Venezuela of 2 July 2020 documented more than 1 300 extrajudicial killings by security forces between 1 January and 31 May 2020;
- T. whereas the Maduro regime has failed to provide transparent information, accept international humanitarian assistance and give priority to the needs and rights of the most vulnerable segments of the population; whereas on 1 June 2020, an agreement was concluded between the Ministry of the People's Power for Health and the National Assembly's advisory team for COVID-19 to allow humanitarian aid to be delivered to Venezuela apolitically through the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) whereas over the years, the regime has rejected any form of humanitarian aid;
- U. whereas the Maduro regime has, since 2016, supported illegal artisanal gold mining in

the Venezuelan Amazon to finance irregular armed groups; whereas the gold has been smuggled out of the country through irregular channels to be sold and exchanged illicitly abroad; whereas this so-called blood gold is extracted and exploited at the expense of human rights and the environment under illegal and criminal conditions which seriously threaten both;

- V. whereas effective actions are needed to stop the security threat to the wider region constituted by the links between Maduro's dictatorial regime, terrorist groups and organised armed groups carrying out their criminal activities in Venezuela;
1. Reiterates its deep concern at the severity of the humanitarian emergency, which poses a profound threat to the lives of Venezuelans; expresses its solidarity with all Venezuelans forced to flee their country for want of very basic living conditions, such as access to food, drinking water, health services and medicines;
 2. Draws attention to the worsening migration crisis which has spread across the entire region, namely to Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Brazil, Panama and Argentina, as well as some EU Member States and the Caribbean, and highlights the extremely difficult circumstances which are further aggravated by the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic; praises the efforts of the neighbouring countries and the solidarity they have shown; asks the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to continue cooperating with these countries and territories, not only by providing humanitarian assistance but also by providing more resources and through development policy;
 3. Urges the Venezuelan authorities to acknowledge the ongoing humanitarian crisis, to prevent its further deterioration, and to promote political and economic solutions to ensure the safety of all civilians and stability for the country and the region; takes note of the agreement reached between Venezuela and the PAHO on the fight against COVID-19;
 4. Calls for urgent action to prevent the aggravation of the humanitarian and public health crisis, and in particular the reappearance of diseases such as measles, malaria, diphtheria and foot-and-mouth disease; calls for the rapid implementation of a short-term response to counter malnutrition among the most vulnerable groups, such as women, children and sick people;
 5. Welcomes the pledges and efforts of the International Donors Conference in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants; calls, in this context, for a reduction in bureaucracy and a simplified framework that can ensure the pledges reach those who are in desperate need as soon as possible;
 6. Strongly rejects the violations of the democratic, constitutional and transparent functioning of the National Assembly, as well as the acts of intimidation, violence and arbitrary decisions against its members; denounces the undemocratic appointment of new members to the National Electoral Council and the stripping of parties of their current boards of directors against the will of their members;
 7. Reiterates its acknowledgement that, as a result of the transparent and democratic vote of the National Assembly, Juan Guaidó is the legitimate President of the National

Assembly and the legitimate interim President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in accordance with Article 233 of the Venezuelan Constitution;

8. Reiterates its full support to the National Assembly, which is the only legitimately elected democratic body of Venezuela and whose powers need to be respected, including the prerogatives and safety of its members; insists that a peaceful political solution can only be reached if the National Assembly's constitutional prerogatives are fully respected;
9. Recalls that respect for democratic institutions and principles and the upholding of the rule of law are essential conditions for finding a solution to the crisis in Venezuela for the benefit of its people; therefore urgently calls for the creation of conditions leading to free, transparent and credible presidential and legislative elections based on a fixed calendar, fair conditions for all actors, transparency and the presence of credible international observers as the only way out of the crisis, thereby excluding any violence or military action;
10. Calls on the EU and other international actors to mobilise a response from the international community that contributes to the urgent restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela;
11. Recalls that the Member States are legally bound by Council Decision 2017/2074 to implement the restrictive measures contained therein, notably the prevention of the entry into, or transit through, their territories of the persons to whom the restrictive measures apply, as well as an obligation to notify the Council immediately in writing of any exemptions they have granted;
12. Takes note of the Council decision of 29 June 2020 to add 11 Venezuelan officials to the list of those subject to individual sanctions which do not harm the Venezuelan population, and calls for that list to be strengthened and enlarged if the situation of human rights and democracy in the country continues to deteriorate; considers that the EU authorities must restrict the movements of the individuals on that list, as well as those of their closest relatives, and freeze their assets and visas; further calls for an immediate ban on the trade in and circulation of illegal blood gold from Venezuela;
13. Strongly regrets Mr Maduro's threats to expel the EU ambassador from Caracas as a form of retaliation for the sanctions imposed on 11 officials responsible for serious human rights violations; takes note, in this regard, of the initial statement of the VP/HR announcing reciprocity and calls on the Member States to also consider acting under the principle of reciprocity if this situation arises again, namely by revoking the credentials of Maduro's Ambassadors in the EU; reiterates its call on Member States to recognise the political representatives appointed by Juan Guaidó;
14. Denounces the rampant corruption which has become an integral part of the Maduro regime; denounces the Maduro regime's use of political funding as a tool of foreign interference; strongly denounces and deplures cases of corruption, including those under judicial investigation in Member States;
15. Calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners and an end to the torture, ill-treatment and harassment of political opponents, human rights activists and peaceful

protesters, and for those unfairly forced into exile to be allowed to return;

16. Fully supports the ICC investigations into the extensive crimes and acts of repression perpetrated by the Venezuelan regime; urges the European Union to support the initiative of the ICC States Parties to open an investigation into crimes against humanity committed by the de facto Maduro government, thereby holding those responsible to account;
17. Takes note of the decision of the British Court of 2 July 2020, which unequivocally recognises the democratic legitimacy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the person of its President Juan Guaidó by giving him legal access to the Republic's gold reserves;
18. Requests that a fact-finding mission be dispatched to the country in order to assess the situation;
19. 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 legitimate interim President of the Republic and National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the governments and parliaments of the Lima Group countries, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States.