

Proposal of a Peace Mission for Venezuela

Incremental Strategy to Address Venezuela's Political Crisis with UN Leadership and Multilateral Support

I. CONTEXT

Venezuela is going through one of the darkest periods in its history following the presidential elections of July 28, 2024. This post-electoral crisis has severely worsened the situation in the country, with an increase in state repression marked by arbitrary detentions, political persecution, and the closure of civic spaces. Once again, the ruling group has resorted to repression, persecution, and violence to impose a state of terror on those who dissent or challenge its authority.

The democratic opposition rejects the government's illegitimate claim to power and presents irrefutable evidence of its electoral victory. The regime's repressive agenda aims to prevent democratic alternation, perpetuate the autocratic regime, and strengthen persecution against civil society and human rights defenders.

Despite the public's historic commitment during the electoral process, their efforts were betrayed by an authoritarian context that continues to impose barriers to democracy and violate fundamental rights.

Recent reports from the Fact-Finding Mission to the UN Human Rights Council reveal severe human rights violations, highlighting systematic patterns of persecution and repression. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has underscored the severity of the situation, describing the systematic use of terror as a mechanism for state control and repression. These findings stress the urgent need for a firmer and more coordinated international response to protect Venezuelans' rights and pressure the regime to adhere to democratic norms.

Economic, social, and political sectors have promoted a strategy of recognizing Nicolás Maduro, easing sanctions, and restructuring foreign debt at the expense of democratic opportunities, freedoms, and human rights. Amid this suffering, internal and external pressure must focus on immediately ending repression and deepening negotiations toward a democratic transition. The international community has already demonstrated its support for Venezuela's democratic cause, but now is the time to push for bold ideas to advance democracy.

II. PAST ACTIONS

Civil society has played a crucial role in leveraging international and multilateral spaces as tools of resistance, channeling its struggle for justice, democracy, and human rights through cooperation with organizations like the United Nations. Venezuelan civil society organizations have been pioneers in implementing early warning strategies and activating international mechanisms with diverse mandates.

These mechanisms have been successful in generating international visibility, mobilizing global support, and ensuring that violations do not go unpunished. They have strengthened a network of cooperation that bolsters the defense of fundamental rights in Venezuela. Successes include:

- The deployment of the UN's humanitarian architecture in Venezuela and the establishment of the Resident Coordinator's Office.
- The approval and successive renewals of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' Office and the International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela.
- The presence of the UN Electoral Expert Panel in the 2021 regional elections and the 2024 presidential elections.

These mechanisms have not only enabled documentation and understanding of Venezuela's complex crisis through different UN mechanisms but also laid the groundwork for higher-level UN political strategies.

The escalation of violence and repression after July 28 demands urgent, coordinated international action to stop these violations and facilitate a peaceful transition. UN political mechanisms, particularly those related to peace and security, can play a crucial role, considering the impact of the Secretary-General's statement following the publication of the expert panel's report.

Special envoys and mediation mechanisms led by the Secretary-General have provided spaces for political dialogue and effective supervision of potential agreements, ensuring population protection and progress in resolving political crises, as seen in Colombia (2017) and Bolivia (2019).

III. PROPOSAL

The UN Secretary-General must take bold diplomatic leadership to mediate Venezuela's political crisis and mobilize an effective international response. Brazil and Colombia, as regional leaders, have the capacity to facilitate constructive dialogue and are crucial actors in stabilizing the region and managing Venezuela's migration crisis.

This proposal requires the broadest possible multilateral consensus, involving not only traditional actors but also those with alternative geopolitical perspectives. Countries with influence in the region and ties to the Venezuelan government must work towards a negotiated solution that ensures a stable political transition and respect for human rights.

Active participation from these actors can help build more inclusive and realistic agreements, fostering dialogue for a peaceful and lasting solution. Amid growing tensions over widespread questioning of the electoral results, there is a clear need for political action to create conditions for constructive dialogue between the parties.

Key Proposal Elements:

- **Appointment of a Special Political Envoy:** The Secretary-General should appoint a Special Political Envoy as a starting point for an incremental strategy to

progressively activate UN political mechanisms and elevate Venezuela's situation to the highest level of international discussion.

- **Gradual Mediation Process:** The envoy would facilitate dialogue among the Venezuelan government, the international community, civil society, the democratic opposition, and the leadership emerging from the July 28 elections.
- **Comprehensive Political Mission:** The envoy's efforts could pave the way for establishing a political mission supervised by the Security Council. This mission would oversee mediation, verify electoral processes, and manage an eventual political transition.

The ultimate goal is to develop a clear roadmap to address Venezuela's crisis through multilateral efforts in justice, human rights, and regional stability. The initiative would ensure the implementation of agreements with the legitimacy and weight of international support.

The Secretary-General can take this step without formal authorization from Member States under their good offices prerogatives. However, securing the backing of key actors would enhance the initiative's legitimacy and effectiveness, strengthening regional and international support for mediation efforts and facilitating the implementation of a robust mandate for a future political supervision mission.



This document was developed through consultation and reflection with various civil society and political actors in Venezuela and the region. Given the repressive context in Venezuela, the identities of many contributors are protected.