



Plenary sitting

B8-0226/2019

25.3.2019

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 emergency situation in Venezuela
(2019/2628(RSP))

Elena Valenciano, Ramón Jáuregui Atondo, Francisco Assis
on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the emergency situation in Venezuela
(2019/2628(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, of 18 December 2014 on the persecution of the democratic opposition in Venezuela², of 12 March 2015 on the situation in Venezuela³, of 8 June 2016 on the situation in Venezuela⁴, of 27 April 2017 on the situation in Venezuela⁵, of 8 February 2018 on the situation in Venezuela⁶, of 3 May 2018 on the elections in Venezuela⁷, of 5 July 2018 on the migration crisis and humanitarian situation in Venezuela and at its terrestrial borders with Colombia and Brazil⁸, of 25 October 2018 on the situation in Venezuela⁹ and of 31 January 2019 on the situation in Venezuela¹⁰,
- having regard to the Terms of Reference of the International Contact Group on Venezuela, as adopted by the General Secretariat of the Council on 30 January 2019,
- having regard to the remarks made on 7 February 2019 by the High Representative/ Vice President Federica Mogherini at the press conference following the first inaugural meeting of the International Contact Group on Venezuela,
- having regard to the remarks made on 12 March 2019 by the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, on behalf of High Representative / Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the situation in Venezuela,
- having regard to the Statement of 21 March 2019 made by the spokesperson on the latest developments in Venezuela,
- having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1656 of 6 November 2018 amending Decision (CFSP) 2017/2074 concerning restrictive measures in Venezuela¹¹, which renews until 14 November 2019 the targeted restrictive measures currently in place,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the Inter-American Democratic Charter adopted on 11 September

¹ OJ C 285, 29.8.2017, p. 145.

² OJ C 294, 12.8.2016, p. 21.

³ OJ C 316, 30.8.2016, p. 190.

⁴ OJ C 86, 6.3.2018, p. 101.

⁵ OJ C 298, 23.8.2018, p. 137.

⁶ OJ C 463, 21.12.2018, p. 61.

⁷ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0199.

⁸ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0313.

⁹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0436.

¹⁰ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0061.

¹¹ OJ L 276, 7.11.2018, p. 10.

2001,

- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
 - having regard to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC),
 - having regard to the Venezuelan Constitution,
 - having regard to the Venezuelan National Assembly report on the events that took place at the Venezuelan border during an attempt to bring humanitarian aid into the country¹²,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the situation of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela continues to deteriorate; whereas increasing numbers of people continue to leave Venezuela for different reasons, including insecurity and violence, human rights violations and the deterioration of the rule of law, lack of food, medicine or access to essential social services, loss of income and increasing poverty rates;
- B. whereas according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 87 % of the population of Venezuela is affected by poverty, with the extreme poverty level standing at 61.2 %; whereas in 2018, a nationwide study conducted by three prestigious Venezuelan universities found that 80 % of Venezuelan households suffered food insecurity and that in 2017 each interviewee had an average weight loss of 11 kilograms;
- C. whereas, following the invitation of interim President Juan Guaidó, on 23 February the US tried to deploy humanitarian aid worth USD 20 million into Venezuela via its borders with Colombia and Brazil, but was ultimately unsuccessful; whereas the Government of Venezuela had closed its borders with its neighbouring countries 48 hours prior to the aforementioned intervention; whereas Venezuela also blocked sea travel between Venezuela and the nearby Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao, where aid was also being stockpiled; whereas in their joint statement, the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement stated that they could not be involved, citing their shared ‘fundamental principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence’;
- D. whereas on 28 January 2019, the US adopted a new set of sanctions against Petróleos de Venezuela S.A. (PdVSA); whereas until 28 April 2019, US citizens were authorised to engage in all transactions and activities that relate to the purchase and importation of petroleum and petroleum products from PdVSA; whereas after the expiration of the 90-day wind-down period, unless they have the authorisation of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), US citizens will not be allowed to purchase petroleum or petroleum products from PdVSA or any other entity it owns, either directly or indirectly; whereas prior to these events, the US received approximately 40 % of

¹² Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 2019, ‘Informe sobre los sucesos ocurridos en puntos de frontera relacionados con el intento de ingreso de la Ayuda Humanitaria’ <https://comunidadenmovimiento.cl/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Informe-AN-sobre-hechos-ocurridos-el-23-y-24F-1.pdf>

Venezuelan exports and was PdVSA's largest cash-paying client and a key source of production inputs; whereas on 31 January 2019, when referring to Venezuela, the UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures stated that 'coercion, whether military or economic, must never be used to seek a change in government in a sovereign state. The use of sanctions by outside powers to overthrow an elected government is in violation of all norms of international law'¹³;

- E. whereas on 7 March 2019 a nationwide electricity blackout caused chaos across the country, paralysed airports and hospitals, and cut off phone and internet services, in addition to water supplies; whereas, according to Maracaibo's Chamber of Commerce, some 500 businesses were ransacked in the unrest, and countless people were injured in clashes between looters, security guards, gang members and the security forces;
- F. whereas the electricity blackout has worsened the country's healthcare infrastructure and threatened the public health and security of its people; whereas shortages in medications and health supplies, the shutting down of basic utilities at healthcare facilities and the emigration of healthcare workers have led to a progressive decline in the operational capacity of healthcare;
- G. whereas it is difficult to quantify the impact that the crisis has had on public health, since the Venezuelan Ministry of Health stopped publishing crucial public health statistics in 2016; whereas from 2012 to 2016, infant deaths increased by 63 % and maternal mortality more than doubled; whereas since 2016, outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and diphtheria have spread throughout the region; whereas from 2016 to 2017, Venezuela had the largest rate of increase in cases of malaria in the world, and in 2015 tuberculosis rates were the highest in the country in 40 years; whereas between 2017 and 2018, most patients who were infected with HIV had their treatment interrupted due to a lack of medication¹⁴;
- H. whereas outbreaks and expanding epidemics of infectious diseases associated with declining basic public health services are threatening the health of the country and the region, which hosts 90 % of the 3 million Venezuelan migrants who have migrated since 2015; whereas the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expects the number of migrants to reach 5 million by the end of 2019 if the situation persists;
- I. whereas on 18 February 2019, three Members (MEPs) of the European Parliament's PPE Group were denied access to the country; whereas on 7 March 2019, the German Ambassador to Venezuela was given 48 hours to leave the country;
- J. whereas on 31 January 2019, the European Council decided to establish the International Contact Group on Venezuela; whereas, in its Terms of Reference, it stated that its objective was to 'within a limited timeframe of 90 days, promote a common understanding and a more concerted approach among key international actors on the situation in Venezuela aiming at a peaceful and democratic solution to the current crisis

¹³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24131&LangID=E>

¹⁴ Source: The Lancet [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30344-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)30344-7/fulltext)

[...] through the holding of new elections with all guarantees for a free and fair electoral process, supervised by international independent observers. The objective is not to be a mediator but to support a political dynamic that the group can then further accompany and consolidate’;

- K. whereas the EU remains convinced that a peaceful political democratic solution is the only sustainable way out of the Venezuelan crisis and is engaging with international and regional partners through the International Contact Group; whereas the previous attempts to address the crisis through a process of negotiation and dialogue have not yielded tangible results;
- L. whereas, contrary to the Lima Group or the Montevideo Mechanism, the International Contact Group is the only existing political initiative that has access to all of the various stakeholders in Venezuela, both in the region and the international community; whereas it is currently pursuing the establishment of a ‘Working Party for the implementation of international assistance’, which would be placed under the leadership of the UN in order to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian aid by specialised bodies in accordance with international principles and following a strict needs-based approach; whereas the objective is to secure and enlarge the space for the delivery of neutral and impartial aid to those in need, according to the internationally agreed principles;
- M. whereas the International Contact Group has also established a ‘Working Group on Elections’, which is assisted by electoral experts; whereas in order to hold free and fair elections, new members must first of all be appointed to the Venezuelan institutions playing a key role in the supervision of these elections, in particular the National Electoral Council (CNE) and the Supreme Court of Justice (TSJ), in addition to other potential institutions such as the Comptroller General; whereas another key aspect would be to restore the rights of all political leaders and parties to stand and participate;
- N. whereas in recent days, Venezuela’s security forces have detained several members of the cabinet of the interim President Juan Guaidó, including members of his family, in an effort to weaken his political environment; whereas on 21 March 2019, Venezuela’s security forces detained Juan Guaidó’s Head of Cabinet, Roberto Marrero, and forcefully entered the home of Sergio Vergara, a Member of the National Assembly for the State of Táchira, disregarding his parliamentary immunity;
1. Expresses its solidarity and full support to the people of Venezuela who are suffering the effects of a severe humanitarian and political crisis;
 2. Recalls its previous position to categorically reject any proposals or attempts to resolve the crisis that might entail the use of violence or a military intervention; reaffirms its previous positions stating that a peaceful, democratic and inclusive solution is the only sustainable way out of the current political impasse and the severe social and humanitarian crisis it has provoked;
 3. Reiterates its full support to the National Assembly, which is the legitimate democratic body of Venezuela, and whose powers need to be restored and respected, including the prerogatives and safety of its members; recalls the recognition of and respect for the National Assembly’s constitutional role; supports the request of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to adopt precautionary measures in favour of Members

of the Assembly;

4. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all persons detained on the grounds that they are relatives of interim President Juan Guaidó or members of his team: reiterates its previous calls to the Venezuelan Government to immediately end its repression of political leaders, journalists and members of the opposition;
5. Requests that the European External Action Service (EEAS) continue working together with the opposition, the Government and international and regional actors through the International Contact Group in an effort to achieve two main objectives: first, support the delivery of humanitarian aid to Venezuela in line with internationally agreed principles, and second, build a common understanding among the main actors involved of the factors which will make for a peaceful way out of the crisis and ways in which the country can achieve a peaceful and democratic solution through fresh and credible presidential elections;
6. Calls on the EEAS to actively promote an agreement on the deployment of humanitarian aid and ensure this is channelled through the United Nations according to the internationally agreed principles; expresses its support for the ‘Working Party for the implementation of international assistance’ and recalls its previous calls to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid urgently into the country so as to alleviate the population of its suffering; calls on the EU institutions to do their utmost to ensure that EU assistance is provided on the ground and condemns the Venezuelan Government for not allowing its entry into the country, despite the needs of the population;
7. Recommends that, in its efforts, the EEAS work towards obtaining the maximum support of the countries in the region and seek the active participation of the UN, wherever it refers to humanitarian aid and political agreements that set out to resolve the crisis in Venezuela;
8. Recognises the key role that the Cuban authorities have played in the past in relation to regional crises and calls on the EEAS to explore together with Cuba the opening of spaces for a peaceful, democratic and negotiated solution to the crisis;
9. Supports the works of the ‘Working Group on Elections’ of the International Contact Group, and calls on all parties to cooperate in the development of confidence-building measures such as the release of political prisoners, the lifting of the ban on opposition politicians, and the establishment of a balanced National Electoral Council; expects that once the enabling conditions are in place and spaces are open for the political, democratic and peaceful outcome of the crisis, a mediation process for a political dialogue among Venezuelans should be launched as the only possible way to solve the crisis;
10. Calls on the Venezuelan authorities to launch an investigation into the events that occurred on 23 and 24 February 2019, so as to clarify who is responsible for the alleged casualties among the indigenous Pemón community; supports the National Assembly’s request to the Inter-American Committee of Human Rights to adopt precautionary measures in favour of the indigenous Pemón community;
11. Commends the work carried out by international organisations, civic platforms and

health professionals in providing support to alleviate the situation; supports the National Assembly's request to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to adopt precautionary measures in favour of health professionals, and reminds the Venezuelan Government that it should protect humanitarian organisations and their staff in the field;

12. 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, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States.