



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2024)0013

Situation in Venezuela

European Parliament resolution of 19 September 2024 on the situation in Venezuela (2024/2810(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to other UN human rights treaties and instruments,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and the 1954 Caracas Convention on Diplomatic Asylum,
- having regard to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC),
- having regard to the Venezuelan Constitution,
- having regard to the statements of 31 July and 12 August 2024 by the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,
- having regard to the statement of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of 3 September 2024 on the 'climate of fear' in Venezuela,
- having regard to the interim report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Venezuelan presidential election of 28 July 2024, published on 9 August 2024,
- having regard to the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) of 29 July 2024 on the presidential elections in Venezuela,

- having regard to the statements of 4 and 24 August 2024 by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on behalf of the EU on post-election developments in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All, signed by Nicolás Maduro's regime and the Venezuelan opposition alliance, the Unitary Platform, in October 2023 (the Barbados Agreement),
 - having regard to the report of the Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation of the Organization of American States' (OAS) Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy of 30 July 2024 on the presidential elections in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the OAS resolution of 16 August 2024 on the situation in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the statement of the Carter Center of 30 July 2024 on the Venezuelan election,
 - 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 to the statement by the President of the Electoral Observation Delegation of the European Parliament of 23 November 2021 on the regional and local elections in Venezuela in 2021,
 - having regard to Rule 136(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 28 July 2024, a presidential election was held in Venezuela to choose a president for a six-year term beginning on 10 January 2025; whereas this election would have represented a unique opportunity to move from a corrupt autocracy towards a return to democracy if all the items of the Barbados Agreement had been respected;
 - B. whereas Nicolás Maduro's regime has continually harassed, persecuted and censored activists, journalists and civil society organisations in the midst of an ongoing socio-economic, political and humanitarian crisis marked by hyperinflation, escalating starvation, disease, huge levels of corruption, crime and impunity, flagrant violations of human rights and high mortality rates, which have resulted in the mass emigration of more than 7,7 million Venezuelans seeking to escape the tyranny; whereas there are significant shortages in public services and it is increasingly difficult for Venezuelans to access food and medicines; whereas this crisis is one of the largest displacement crises in the world;
 - C. whereas for years, the use of politically motivated arbitrary detentions has been part of a policy of repression implemented by the Maduro regime and of a widespread and systematic attack

against the population of Venezuela; whereas there have been systematic restrictions on public information, freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly, particularly for dissidents of the regime, trade unionists, human rights defenders and the most vulnerable members of society;

- D. whereas on 17 October 2023 in Venezuela, representatives of the Maduro regime and the Unitary Platform opposition alliance signed two agreements, known as the Barbados Agreements, which cover matters including the promotion of political rights, electoral guarantees for all, respect for the right of each political actor to choose their candidate for the presidential elections freely, and the release of political prisoners; whereas these agreements covered important topics such as allowing international observers to participate in the electoral process; whereas the agreements were signed to serve as a first step to ensure free and fair elections in Venezuela; whereas political prisoners have not been released, despite this being an explicit condition of the Barbados Agreement;
- E. whereas María Corina Machado was elected as the candidate of the opposition to the regime at the primaries of the Unitary Platform in 2023 with 92,35 % of the vote; whereas the Maduro regime disqualified her from standing for election on arbitrary and politically motivated grounds, in a flagrant breach of the Barbados Agreement; whereas the Maduro regime has disqualified several other opposition politicians over the years to prevent political change; whereas upon her disqualification, María Corina Machado maintained the unity of the democratic opposition to the regime by supporting a new candidate, Corina Yoris, who in turn was not authorised to register; whereas Edmundo González Urrutia was ultimately the candidate of the democratic opposition to the regime;
- F. whereas in the lead-up to the election, the regime tirelessly persecuted, abducted, arrested and imprisoned activists of the opposition and the campaign team of the opposition leader María Corina Machado and presidential candidate Edmundo González, and criminalised the work of lawyers, human rights defenders and civil society actors; whereas numerous electoral irregularities and violations were reported, including the disqualification of around 16 political parties, barriers to the registration of presidential candidates, short voter registration deadlines and a lack of registration offices, minimal public information, and obstruction of overseas voters; whereas according to the figures provided by the regime, only 69 211 Venezuelans living abroad were able to register to vote, although it is estimated that half of the 7,7 million Venezuelans living abroad are of voting age;
- G. whereas since 20 March 2024, six close collaborators of Vente Venezuela have sought refuge in the Argentinian embassy in

Caracas, where they continue to face increasing pressure and harassment by the Venezuelan security forces;

- H. whereas on 28 May 2024, the regime-controlled National Electoral Council (CNE) revoked the invitation sent to the EU to observe the election; whereas numerous international delegations that were invited by the democratic opposition to the regime, the Comando Nacional de Campaña Con VZLA, were denied entry into the country or expelled, including a delegation of members of a political group of the European Parliament and five Latin American former presidents;
- I. whereas the election on 28 July 2024 took place in a largely peaceful environment and the Venezuelan people turned out to vote in high numbers, demonstrating outstanding civic and democratic behaviour despite the constant efforts by the regime to thwart the electoral process; whereas numerous reports of restrictions on access to many polling stations for domestic observers and opposition party witnesses were recorded; whereas pressure on voters through check-points set up by the regime was also reported at numerous polling stations; whereas major irregularities were revealed on election night and the transmission of official vote count results from the polling stations to the CNE was interrupted when around 30 % of the electoral records (*actas*) were available;
- J. whereas the few credible and independent observation missions that managed to observe the election – teams from the UN and the Carter Center – reported that ‘Venezuela’s 2024 presidential election did not meet international standards of electoral integrity and cannot be considered democratic’, that they ‘cannot verify or corroborate the results of the election declared by the regime-controlled CNE’, and that ‘the electoral authority’s failure to announce disaggregated results by polling station constitutes a serious breach of electoral principles’; whereas the report of the UN panel of experts stated that the premature declaration of a winner ‘had no precedent in contemporary democratic elections’, and that the election process lacked ‘basic transparency and integrity’; whereas the election was neither free nor fair;
- K. whereas after voting closed, the regime-controlled CNE refused to publish the official record of tally sheets and falsified the results of the election, announcing the false victory of Maduro, which constitutes a serious breach of electoral principles; whereas this meant that the international community could not verify or corroborate the results announced by the CNE; whereas the CNE’s results management process therefore fell short of the basic transparency and integrity measures that are essential for holding credible elections;
- L. whereas the democratic opposition to the regime managed to obtain 83,5 % of the official tally sheets and has credibly demonstrated that

the winner of the election was Edmundo González Urrutia, with 67,08 % of the votes cast; whereas the interim report of the UN Panel of Experts on the election confirms the authenticity of the documents published by the opposition;

- M. whereas the EU and other democratic countries and regional and international organisations have not recognised the election or its outcome;
 - N. whereas in the aftermath of the election, peaceful protests took place across the country to contest the fraudulent display by the Maduro regime; whereas these protests were met with extreme violence and repression, resulting in over 23 deaths and over 2 400 arrests and enforced disappearances, including of approximately 120 children;
 - O. whereas María Corina Machado has been forced to go into hiding for fear of reprisals from the Maduro regime and Edmundo González Urrutia has been forced into exile after an arrest warrant was issued against him and serious threats were made to his life and that of his relatives; whereas the term of office of the Prosecutor General, Tarek William Saab, has expired in the meantime; whereas as early as 5 August 2024, a criminal investigation was opened in Venezuela against González and Machado for announcing an election winner other than Maduro and allegedly instigating disobedience and insurrection;
 - P. whereas on 14 September 2024, the Venezuelan regime announced it had detained six foreign nationals, including three EU citizens (one Czech and two Spaniards), on the dubious grounds that they were plotting to 'destabilise' the country; whereas regime officials have formulated extremely serious and manifestly fictitious accusations of Spanish 'interference' through its national intelligence agency;
 - Q. whereas in mid-August the Venezuelan regime expelled the diplomatic missions of seven Latin American nations – Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay – that had expressed concerns over the announced results;
1. Demands that Venezuela's electoral authorities release full, transparent and detailed voting results, including results per polling station; calls on the Venezuelan authorities to respect the election results and the will of the Venezuelan people;
 2. Recognises Edmundo González Urrutia as the legitimate and democratically elected President of Venezuela; also recognises María Corina Machado as the leader of the democratic forces in Venezuela, since she was elected at the primaries of the Unitary Platform in 2023 with 92,35 % of the vote;
 3. Calls for the EU and its Member States to do their utmost to ensure that the legitimate and democratically elected president can take

office on 10 January 2025, in accordance with the Venezuelan Constitution;

4. Strongly condemns and fully rejects the electoral fraud orchestrated by the regime-controlled CNE, which refused to make public the official result by publishing the tally sheet of each polling station, despite repeated calls from the international community; highlights that the Venezuelan regime has failed to respect the Barbados Agreement in relation to the presidential election, making the holding of a free and fair election impossible;
5. Notes that reports from international election observation missions clearly state that the Venezuelan presidential election of 28 July 2024 did not meet international standards of electoral integrity; reiterates that the regime-controlled CNE has failed to publish complete and independently verifiable electoral records (*actas*) from all the country's polling stations;
6. Stresses, in particular, that the interim report of the UN Panel of Experts, which Venezuela's regime-controlled CNE had invited to assess the overall conduct of the election within the framework of the Barbados Agreement, underscored that the results announced were not substantiated; recalls that the UN Panel of Experts reviewed a sample of the electoral records (*actas*) published by the opposition and confirmed that they exhibit all the security features of the original result protocols, which proves their reliability;
7. Reiterates that respecting the will of the Venezuelan people, as expressed in the election, remains the only way for Venezuela to restore democracy, allow for a peaceful and genuine transition and solve the current humanitarian and socio-economic crisis;
8. Underlines and welcomes the role that the Governments of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico are playing; supports all the efforts being made by the international community to find a peaceful, inclusive and democratic solution to the enduring Venezuelan crisis; supports the efforts made by Venezuela's neighbouring countries to deal with the large number of refugees fleeing Venezuela;
9. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the murders, harassment, violations and arrests that have been perpetrated against the democratic opposition to the regime, the Venezuelan people and civil society; calls for an end to the systematic pattern of human rights violations; demands the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and arbitrarily detained persons, and that compensation be provided to them and their families, while restoring their full civil and political rights; demands that the Maduro government cease its policy of repression and attacks on civil society and the opposition;

10. Fully supports the investigations of the ICC and the UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission into the Venezuelan regime's extensive crimes and acts of repression and calls for the EU to support the investigations currently being considered under the Rome Statute into the alleged crimes against humanity, in order to hold those responsible to account;
11. Calls on the UN Human Rights Council to adopt, at its 57th session (9 September to 9 October 2024), a resolution renewing the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela and the presence of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Venezuela; calls for the immediate return of the OHCHR to Venezuela and urges Venezuela to ensure that the necessary conditions are in place for the OHCHR to fully exercise its mandate;
12. Calls on the ICC to include the ongoing human rights violations and arbitrary detentions in its investigations into alleged crimes against humanity committed by the Maduro regime, and to hold those responsible to account;
13. Strongly condemns the Venezuelan Government's issuance of an arrest warrant for Edmundo González; highlights the Spanish Government's decision to welcome Mr González in Spain with the aim of granting him political asylum upon his request, which will make it possible to protect him as well as to maintain a viable perspective for a resolution to the political impasse;
14. Recalls that in May 2024, the EU lifted its sanctions against members of the CNE, as a gesture of goodwill; underlines that this action did not produce any positive effect; calls on the VP/HR and the Council to reinstate these sanctions against the members of the CNE; calls further for the sanctions on the regime to be prolonged and their scope extended in order to apply targeted sanctions through the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against Nicolás Maduro and his inner circle, including Jorge Rodríguez, their families, and all those responsible for violations of human rights in the country;
15. Deplores the fact that none of the key recommendations from the final report of the EU Electoral Observation Mission on the 2021 elections have been implemented; condemns the decision by the CNE to revoke the invitation to the EU to deploy an election observation mission; further condemns the decision of the regime to impede the access of or expel international observers invited by the democratic opposition to the regime, Comando Nacional de Campaña Con VZLA, for election day;
16. Urges the regional players and the international community to put all the pressure they can on the Maduro regime and Maduro's inner

circle to accept the democratic will of the Venezuelan people, recognising Edmundo González Urrutia as the legitimate and democratically elected President of Venezuela; is convinced that if a peaceful transfer of power and the re-establishment of democracy does not occur on 10 January 2025, a renewed migratory exodus to other countries in the region will follow, similar to that which has led close to 8 million Venezuelans to flee the country in recent years;

17. 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 EU-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States summit participants, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, the Organization of American States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the authorities of the Venezuelan regime.