

Forum: United Nations Security Council

Issue: The Situation in Venezuela

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Introduction

Financial collapse and hyperinflation make Venezuela an economic disaster zone. The crisis is no longer confined to one nation: refugees and migrants are streaming into neighbouring countries; epidemics and violent crime are spilling over borders, endangering Colombia's fragile peace process in frontier regions. As Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro looks to cement his hold on power, his country is sinking into a trough of misery. Hyperinflation has compounded the scarcity of food and medicines. Epidemics of preventable diseases and child malnutrition crisis are increasingly deadly. Violent crime has spiked. Insecurities are worse than ever. An estimated four million Venezuelans have emigrated, with tens of thousands crossing the border into Colombia each month in search of a new home. Venezuela's neighbours, once bystanders to its domestic tensions, face a catastrophe on their doorsteps. At the heels of such an intense economic and humanitarian crisis comes political instability. Nicolás Maduro seeks to cement his power through strong authoritarian rule, reacting violently to any political dissent, sentencing opposing powers to political treason and denying freedom of press. Especially with COVID-19 preoccupying the international community, the previous geopolitical progress in response to Venezuela's Rolodex of instabilities has been put on hold, further allowing the president to expand his authoritarian government and sinking Venezuela into further dystopia.

Definition of Key Terms

Financial collapse

An economic collapse is essentially a severe version of an economic depression, where an economy is in complete distress for years, or possibly even decades. A total economic collapse is characterised by economic depression, civil unrest and highly increased poverty levels.

Inflation

Inflation is a quantitative measure of the rate at which the average price level of a basket of selected goods and services in an economy increases over a period of time. Often expressed as a

percentage, inflation indicates a decrease in the purchasing power of a nation's currency. As prices rise, they start to impact the general cost of living for the common public causing the appropriate monetary authority of the country, like the central bank, to take the necessary measures to keep inflation within permissible limits and keep the economy running smoothly. Inflation is measured in a variety of ways depending upon the types of goods and services considered, and is the opposite of deflation which indicates a general decline occurring in prices for goods and services when the inflation rate falls below 0 percent.

Hyperinflation

Hyperinflation is extremely fast or out-of-control inflation. Hyperinflation occurs when price increases are so wild that the concept of inflation is meaningless. Although hyperinflation is considered to be rare, it has occurred as many as 55 times in the 20th century in countries such as China, Germany, Russia, Hungary and Argentina.

Extrajudicial killings

Extrajudicial killing is the illegal killing of a person without any formal judicial proceedings or legal process. The killings are typically done by government authorities and are targeted towards those of political, social or religious figures. By performing the act outside of judicial proceedings, they place the victim outside the protection of the judicial realm, or simply, the law.

Forced disappearances

Enforced disappearances are similar to extrajudicial killings in that they are typically done by a state-sponsored organisation, though illegal, as well as the fact that they target those of political, social or religious figures. They differ from extrajudicial killings in that the action does not necessarily pertain to the killing of a person, but rather only the kidnapping, or secret abduction, of one. Typically, these enforced disappearances involve the subject being imprisoned and/or tortured. Both extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances are done to incite terror within their community, in hopes of causing less dissent and feelings of insecurity.

Socialist

Socialists are those who practice and advocate for socialism, a political philosophy that encourages social ownership and control rather than private ownership. Socialists believe that individuals live in cooperation with each other, thus, every product produced in society is a social product; a truly free society requires communal control of resources. Socialism is typically considered as 'left-wing' on political spectrums.

Populist

Populism is yet another political philosophy. Populism champions the 'people's' opinion, critical of anything that involves the idea of the 'elite', which includes the idea of a political representation. Populism seeks to maximise the power the 'people' hold. A common criticism of populism is that though it calls for reformation of the political establishment, it does not provide any alternatives of it. Therefore, in practice, populism is often paired with other ideologies, such as socialism.

Corruption

Corruption is the dishonest behavior or criminal offense by those of authority in order to acquire benefits for individual gain. Political corruption pertains to government officials practicing corruption. This often includes using governmental ties or titles in order to gain private benefits. These can vary from bribery to extortion and nepotism. Important to note is that political corruption also pertains to the suppression of opposing political ideologies, whether that be through police brutality or forced disappearances, in order to promote their own.

Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism is a political system which calls for the people's 'blind' submission to authority. It denies individuality and all forms of individual freedom; authoritarianism directly opposes libertarianism. Authoritarian governments believe in and practice the idea of a strong central power, rejecting the idea of political plurality. Leaders often enforce their ideologies onto their people through violence and suppression of individual expression. Famous authoritarian leaders include Vladimir Lenin (USSR), Adolf Hitler (Nazi Germany), Mao Zedong (China), Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe), and reportedly Nicolas Maduro (Venezuela).

Economic policies

Economic policies refer to government policies which intend to influence the behaviour of their economy. This includes policies on government spending, taxation, monetary, fiscal, supply-side and demand-side. Economic policies can influence how much governmental interference there is in the market (also known as government size).

Social policies

Social policies concern how society will meet the needs of its people, including those of security, education and health. They act as guidelines in order to reach what is deemed as the best for its people. Its main goal is to address how societies respond to constant change and challenge, and to better

promote and maximise welfare of the population. An example of a social policy would be the administration of social services, such as health services.

Background Information

Chavez Administration

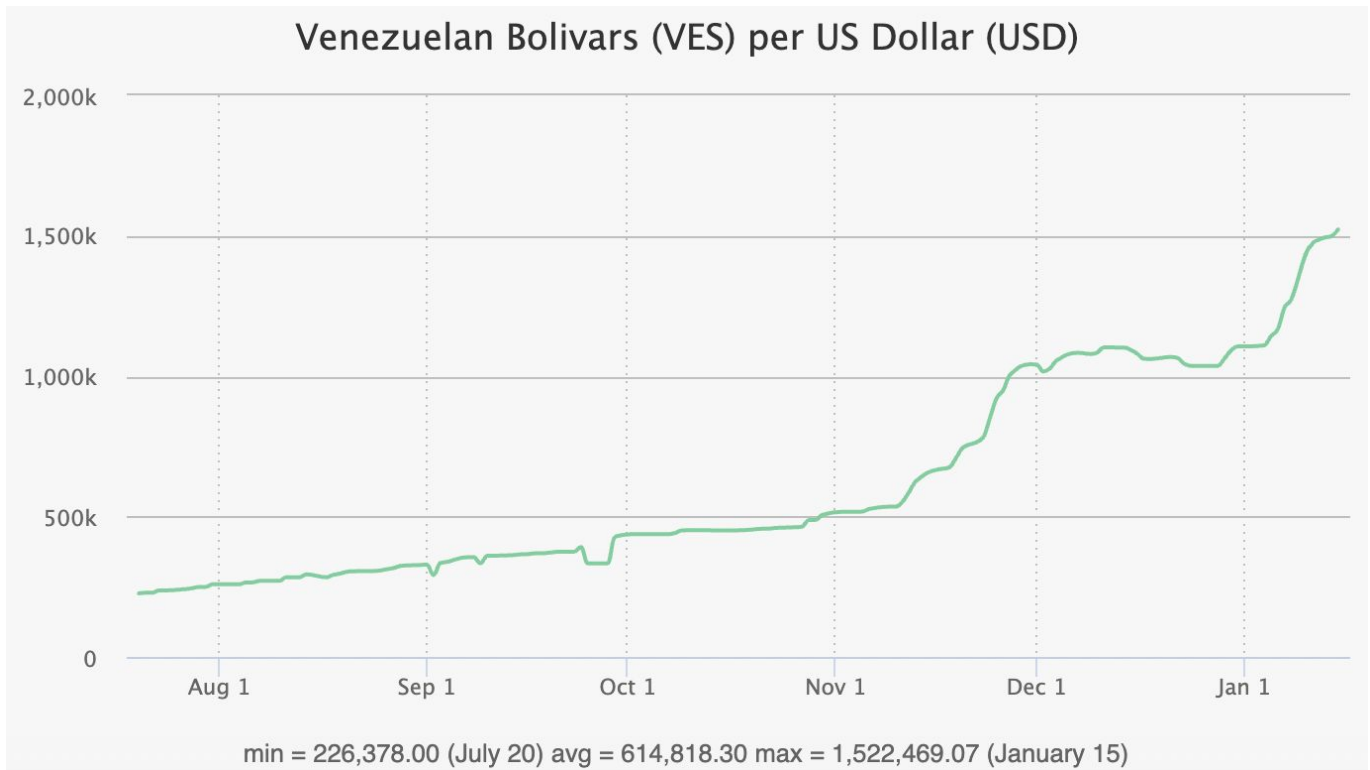
Much of Venezuela's current instabilities and namely, the economic collapse, were the result of nearly 20 years of political, economic and social policies dating back to the election of Hugo Chávez as president in 1998. He had promised a peaceful and democratic social revolution, with his socialist party, the Fifth Republic Movement, calling for serious reformation of both the government and the economy. Chávez succeeded in reducing poverty and unemployment while increasing opportunities for the country's poor, but it came at a cost. By nationalising much of the country's farmland and manufacturing industry, while enacting stringent price controls and dramatically expanding presidential powers, Chávez made Venezuela increasingly dependent on both its main oil exports and his own power for survival. High oil prices and his cult of personality made this feasible, but it did put the country on delicate political and economic footing.

Bolivarian Revolution

Chavez's rise to power is fittingly named the 'Bolivarian Revolution'. When Hugo Chavez had first entered the office, he rewrote the constitution, renaming his country the "Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela". The man behind the name was Simon Bolivar, a prominent Latin American revolutionary leader--Bolivar essentially freed most of northern South America from Spanish rule, including Venezuela, and is still largely considered a hero to Venezuelans today. The ideology that accompanied such a revolution was one that encouraged nationalism and followed in the footsteps of a populism social ideology. Chavez's new constitution not only included a new name, but also adopted new economic policies, funded by Venezuela's prosperous oil revenue--Venezuela had one of the world's largest crude oil reserves, rearing its fast rising economy up until the global oil drop in 2014. The president's new plans and policies all proved to be a great success: redistributing wealth and land; improving healthcare and educational systems; subsidising food to the poor; building welfare programs. All of the populist policies helped President Chavez to gain support from his citizens, allowing him to remain in office for four terms, spanning 16 years. However, as President Chavez had seen his billion dollar funded plans work, he would not scale down his policies' dependency on crude oil reserves. Rather, he scaled them up, making Venezuela increasingly oil-dependent. This meant that as oil prices rose and dropped, the welfare programs funded by the oil revenues also started to fall apart.

Economic Crash

As Venezuela started to become increasingly dependent on their oil revenue, when the price of oil decreased, hyperinflation surged. By 2014, hyperinflation was rampant and would go on to become the most significant issue that modern day Venezuela faces. Hyperinflation occurred due to the inevitable need to mint more cash to inject into the economy, causing monetary incontinence. To consider inflation rates as hyperinflation, rates have to exceed 50%; in Venezuela, the annual inflation rate is 10,398%, more than 200 times the threshold.



Caption #1: Exchange rate graph of VES to USD, 7/20/2020 to 1/15/2021

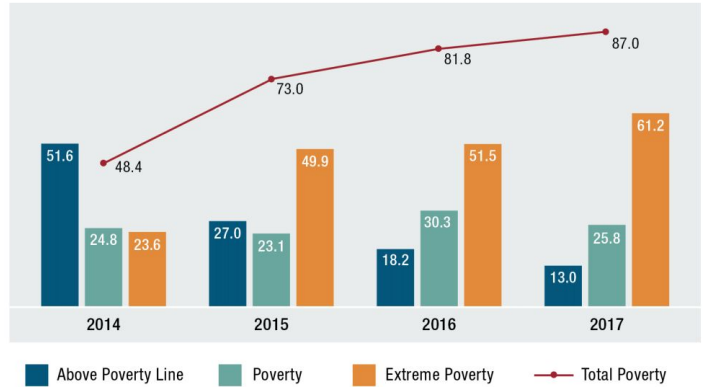
The rampant hyperinflation has crippled the Venezuelan economy; employers can't afford to pay employees and as a result, Venezuela's professional demographic has fled to neighbouring countries for a better livelihood, leaving Venezuela's economy even more crippled. Rates haven't improved, as one of the main contributing factors to its hyperinflation is the government's heavy-oil-dependent economic model, leading to volatile rates and a steadily decreasing value. In January 2019, it only took a little more than two weeks for market prices to double; their state currency, the Bolivar, has deflated so much that they are near worthless, with citizens even using them to make handbags. The living standards in Venezuela are low, with deteriorating infrastructure and an economy that can not support its population, yet, the Maduro administration continues to hold on to the broken strings left from Chavez's state-monitored policies as its crime-riddled population starves to death. Starvation is so rampant that a study conducted in 2017 reported that an average Venezuelan lost 11 kilograms in one year. And as

global oil prices continue to stumble, Venezuela’s economy also continues to free fall, bringing its citizens down with it.

Appendix E: Poverty and Malnutrition in Venezuela

Poverty according to income levels (poverty line)				
Poverty level	2014	2015	2016	2017
Above poverty line	51.6	27.0	18.2	13.0
Poverty	24.8	23.1	30.3	25.8
Extreme poverty	23.6	49.9	51.5	61.2
Total poverty	48.4	73.0	81.8	87.0

Source: Survey on Venezuelan living conditions 2017 (ENCOVI 2017)



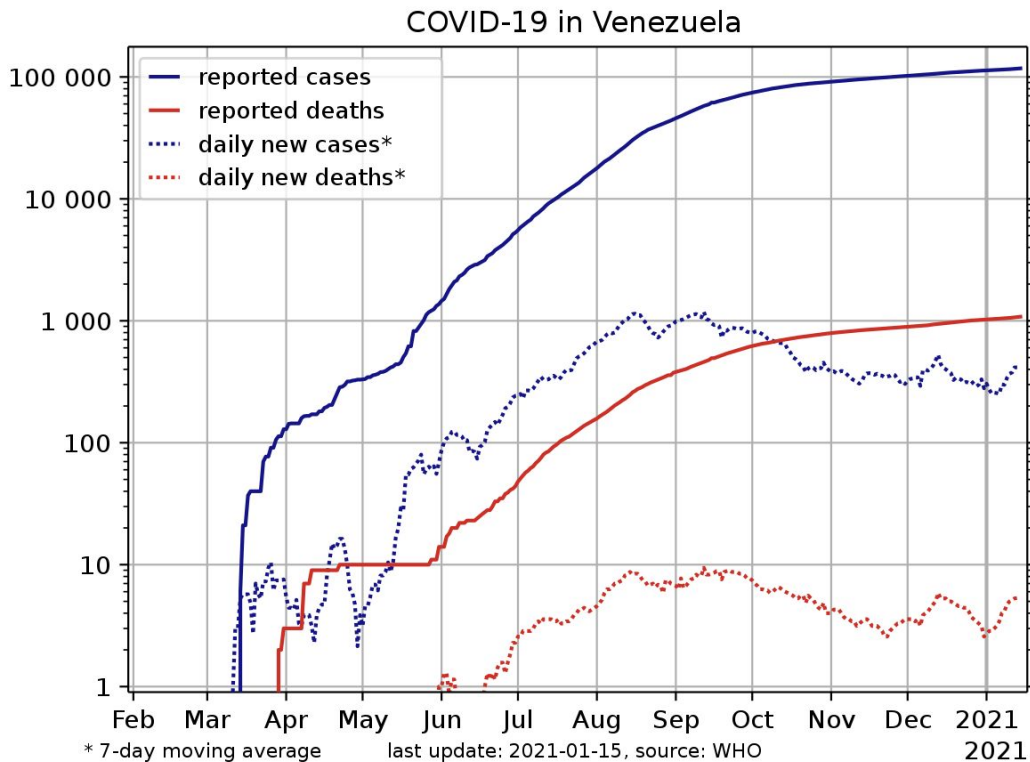
Caption #2: Poverty and Malnutrition trends in Venezuela from 2014 to 2017

Maduro Administration

Upon Chávez’s passing in 2013, the job of keeping Venezuela afloat fell to its new president Nicolás Maduro. As vice president and Minister of Foreign Affairs under Chávez, Maduro was seen by many as the most capable within the government’s inner circle and an obvious successor to Chávez and his Bolivarian Revolution. But the drop of oil price from an average of \$109 a barrel in 2012 to just \$40 a barrel in 2016 sent the Venezuelan economy into a tailspin. Having already lost a significant amount of human capital following Chávez’s nationalisation efforts, there was little else for the country to rely on economically. However, it is the political choices made by Maduro that has led to today’s Venezuelan crisis.

The authoritarianism of the latter years of former President Hugo Chávez’s rule and the first years under Maduro has metastasised into full-blown partisan exploitation of state and judicial institutions. Information that challenges official accounts is brushed aside: the state publishes neither reliable economic data nor credible health statistics. A full-scale default on the foreign debt appears but a matter of time. Scarcity and hunger have led to increased looting. As Covid-19 ravages through Venezuela, a country where over 50% of their healthcare professionals have left in the past five years--in a phase suitably named, ‘brian drain’--, those who remain capable of treating the dying population are not protected with adequate gear, further causing strains on the population. Even with the fight against

COVID-19 being a global concerted effort, the figures coming out of Venezuela can not be 100% trusted by the global community, what with the strict state censorship and denial of freedom of press.



Caption #3: COVID-19 reported cases as of 15th of January, 2021

In its quest for hard currency, the government has set aside over 100,000 square kilometers for mining. Its lack of regulation breeds collusion among the military, criminal gangs and Colombian guerrillas. Migrants heading to Colombia must dodge competing state security forces and armed irregulars in border areas. After crossing, the poorest are left to eke out a living in a region with one of Colombia's highest unemployment rates.

Malaria is again common and spreading across borders. Diseases that had been eradicated, such as measles and diphtheria, have returned.

Economic War

A few years prior to his death and half way through his third presidential term, President Chavez declared what was called an 'economic war', which was meant to be a stand against the economic difficulties which rose from Chavez's populist policies. The so-called 'war' only intensified under the Maduro administration, with it blowing up fully when what was originally a 'low-grade economic war' engaged by the United States turned into an ugly full-scale assault. The U.S. has imposed several sanctions against Venezuela and has declared an embargo (official ban) on Venezuela's largest oil company, rendering it useless. Though the economic war

started due to the United States identifying Venezuela's economic vulnerability as a result of Chavist populist policies, some Venezuelans still believe that the US sanctions are purely to blame for their poor living standards, playing right into Chavez's nationalist ideology riddled hands. These continued supporters of nationalist ideologies rejected Juan Guaido, proposed president of the opposition, as the replacement leader.

Protests and Riots

During the 15 years of Chávez's rule, government respect for human rights eroded, especially in the areas of freedom of press and the rule of law. Rather than correcting this trajectory upon coming to power, in many ways Maduro doubled down, continuing with Chávez's policies while further consolidating power in the executive branch. In 2014, as the economic situation deteriorated and protests erupted over the lack of food, medicine and other necessities in the country as a result of hyperinflation, Maduro reacted by launching crackdowns on protesters, human rights activists, opposition politicians and the media. Since then, both the protests and government crackdown have continued as an estimated 1.5 million Venezuelans have fled the country, looking for basic goods and trying to escape the growing political oppression back home.

The turbulence of 2017 has magnified Venezuela's hardship and the difficulty of finding remedies. While the government has snuffed out months of civil unrest, stripped the opposition-run National Assembly of its power and established a new Constituent Assembly with authority over all Venezuelan institutions, it has made little effort to ameliorate the country's economic woes. Instead, it claims to be protecting the Venezuelan public against foreign powers and their domestic allies, decrying reports of the very real humanitarian crisis as lies aimed at promoting an "imperialist intervention". It is also blocking efforts to provide food and medical aid.

Extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances

More than 8,000 people have been extra-judicially executed from 2015 to 2017 and more than 12,000 people have been arbitrarily detained since the presidential elections in 2013. In addition to that, the panel from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) found evidence of murder and the targeting of opposition members by state security forces as a means for the government to maintain absolute control over the civilian population. The group identified as being possibly responsible for the alleged killings has been connected to Venezuelan authorities, operating under the name of 'Operations for the Liberation of the People' (OLPs). The original operation mission for the OLPs was to stop crime, however, it has since evolved into deterring opposition and any form of political dissent towards the Maduro administration. Since

then, there has been international action condemning state-sponsored 'special forces', such as OLPs and the FAES, including sanctions on commander Rafael Bastardo by the USA.

Re-election

Despite its dismal economic record, the government occupies a strong position. The Venezuelan opposition is divided and rudderless. A sizable segment of the electorate rations and other subsidised goods. The electoral authority remains under executive control, and has proven itself willing to bend the rules in the ruling party's favor and even, in one instance, seemingly to commit outright fraud.

Harder-line opposition factions hope for a U.S. oil embargo or foreign intervention as a shortcut to a transition, but the dangers such actions entail in a country besieged by violence and hunger are too great to countenance. Instead, Latin American governments, together with Western and other powers, should take advantage of the strong international and regional consensus that exists on Venezuela's plight to intensify efforts to resolve the crisis.

Juan Guaidó

With the most recent re-election of 2018, President Maduro once again declares victory, swearing in for another six-year term in the office. Yet, the opposition has claimed complete fraudery and vote-rigging, citing the election as a sham. In place, they have proposed Juan Guaidó, a new force to force President Maduro's exit. As protests mar the streets and violence escalated, Juan Guaidó started to gain support of Venezuelans, as well as international recognition. On the 23rd of January, 2019, Guaidó declared himself as the president of Venezuela and swore himself in. In the days that followed, several international powers would recognise Guaidó as the 'legitimate' leader of Venezuela, spearheading the political and presidential crisis that followed. The United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan and South Korea are only a few amongst the 33 UN recognised states who have voiced support for Guaidó's presidency; on the other hand, Maduro only has 22, though he does have the support of the Russian and Chinese governments, lending him two global superpowers, hence giving him considerable leverage. As of now, the United Nations has remained vocal neutrality on the issue, calling for negotiations between the two parties rather than outright recognition of either one due to internal conflicts in the Security Council.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Venezuelan Military

The Venezuelan Military plays a crucial role in Venezuela's myriad of crises. They are in charge of 'maintaining the status quo', which involves violence and illegal actions, all for upholding their intimate financial relations with the government in exchange for steadfast loyalty. Even after years of economic failure and socioeconomic freefall, the military remains loyal to the Maduro administration. In return, the military has received benefits such as management control over the national oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela SA (PDVSA). Chavez, as well as Maduro's administrations both instilled a sense of insecurity and fear within barracks in order to maintain certain loyalty and undisputed 'peace' amongst troops, in a similar way in which paranoia rolled through the American population during the Cold War, also known as the Red Scare.

United States of America

Under the Trump administration, the United States of America has declared a large-scale economic war on Venezuela, targeting it due to its various economic liabilities. The US has formally imposed several sanctions on Venezuela, including a sanction on President Maduro's foreign assets, as well as charging him with narco-terrorism related counts. As US-Venezuela relations deteriorated over Chavez's presidency, having steered the country away from democracy, the United States recognised Juan Guaido as the acting president, rather than Nicolas Maduro, who has doubled down on Chavez's ideologies. Since recognising Guaido as the president of Venezuela, the United States has been in works with the Opposition to restore and diminish several humanitarian and migration issues as well as the reformation of the law in Venezuela, having already provided 'more than USD\$856 million in assistance', with allocations towards humanitarian assistance and economic and development assistance. The United States of America stands for the transitional government towards a more democratic country.

United Kingdom

In the Venezuelan political crisis, the United Kingdom has publicly recognised Juan Guaido as the acting president. The British government is another national entity that has recognised the unrest and instability within Venezuela and has offered their support in the reconstruction of the country, going as far as establishing the 'Venezuela Reconstruction Unit', led by a former UK ambassador to Venezuela. However, the Venezuelan government has refused all efforts of 'reconstruction', stating that the claims of unrest and instability are simply, 'Washington's coup plans and destabilising initiatives'. Furthermore, the United Kingdom has also imposed sanctions on several senior officers of the Maduro administration, citing human rights violations.

China

China, which itself has been under neo authoritarianism rule since its adoption by the CCP in late 1900s, is one of the 22 UN recognised states who supports the Maduro administration. As China and the United States of America continue to fight for global influence, Latin America has become a key geographical area of interest for them. Hence, Venezuela's President Maduro, who aligns himself with 'populist' philosophies and has attempted to gain authoritarian control himself, has been ardently supported by the Chinese government, benefiting the Chinese geopolitically. Beyond recognition of the Maduro administration, Venezuela has recently joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, led by China, allowing deeper integration of China into the Latin American market. China has been one of the few countries who has continued to engage with Venezuela economically despite its collapsing economy.

France

France has recognised Juan Guaido as the acting president, as well as publicly claiming the illegitimacy of the 2018 elections. As part of the European Union, France joins other European countries in calling for Venezuelan democracy. Just like other prominent states of the world, France has imposed sanctions on Venezuelan senior officials as well as pulling its oil companies out of the country; France has previously urged more EU countries to impose sanctions on Venezuela. In 2020, there has been claims from the Maduro foreign minister that the Opposition leader, Juan Guaido, has been 'hiding' in a French embassy in Caracas. The foreign minister then goes on to suggest that France will regret its 'diplomacy' with the Opposition 'very, very soon': 'It is shameful for the diplomacy of France what has happened, and they will pay the price very, very soon.' France immediately denied all claims of 'hiding' and 'harbouring' the Opposition leader. In addition to claims of harbouring Guaido, Venezuela has also been accused of harassing French embassies in Caracas.

Russian Federation

Along with China, the Russian Federation forms part of the two countries out of the P5 nations who support the Maduro Administration, rejecting Juan Guaido as the interim president. In previous attempts to resolve the issues of instability in Venezuela, including efforts from the 'West' (the United States of America), Russian and Chinese delegations have wielded their veto powers in order to fail such draft resolutions. Russia has denied the need for a renewed, proper presidential election in face of the internationally condemned 2018 one.

Colombia

Colombia shares a major border with Venezuela, spanning over 2000 kilometers, and is therefore a popular destination for those fleeing the instability in Venezuela. The border is often the cause of

diplomatic clashes between Colombia and Venezuela, most recently with the migrant crisis. In 2015, President Maduro had deported thousands of Colombians, closing the border and spreading fear amongst Colombian nationals living in Venezuela. The crisis dissolved in less than a year, with the Maduro administration once again opening up borders. However, with the reopening of Colombian borders, approximately 1.8 million Venezuelans fled their own country due to economic and political instabilities and corruption into Colombian land, in contrast to what has been the historic norm of Colombians fleeing to Venezuela for security. The sudden influx of immigrants into Colombian border cities has caused great economic and budgetary strains on the local population, with the country not yet accustomed to accommodating such a large number of immigrants.

European Union

The European Union, including P5 nation France, has ardently supported Juan Guaido as the interim president of Venezuela and has condemned President Maduro, as well as the Maduro administration, for its numerous violations of human rights, as well as their corrupted political regime. The EU has imposed several sanctions upon senior Venezuelan officials as a bloc, banning travels into the EU as well as freezing all of their assets.

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)--the Spanish acronym being CEPAL--was established by Economic and Social Council resolution 106(VI) of 25 February 1948 and began to function that same year. The scope of the Commission's work was later broadened to include the countries of the Caribbean, and by resolution 1984/67 of 27 July 1984, the Economic Council decided to change its name to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the Spanish acronym, CEPAL, remains unchanged.

ECLAC, which is headquartered in Santiago, Chile, is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. It was founded with the purpose of contributing to the economic development of Latin America, coordinating actions directed towards this end, and reinforcing economic ties among countries and with other nations of the world. The promotion of the region's social development was later included among its primary objectives.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
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1998	Hugo Chavez is elected as president, spearheading the Bolivarian Revolution and bringing in new socialist, populist policies, centered on high oil prices.
January, 2010	Bolivar (Venezuelan currency) devalues by at least 17% for 'priority' imports and by 50% for non-essentials, in an attempt to boost oil revenue.
December, 2010	Parliament grants President Chavez special powers to deal with devastating floods, prompting opposition fears of greater authoritarianism.
April, 2012	Government extends price controls on more basic goods in the battle against inflation. President Chavez threatens to expropriate companies that do not comply with the price controls.
July, 2012	Opposition TV channel Globovision pays a \$2.1m fine to avoid having its assets seized. The media regulator imposed the fine in October over Globovision coverage of prison riot. After a six-year wait, Venezuela becomes a full member of regional trading bloc Mercosur, and is given four years to comply with the bloc's trading regulations.
October, 2012	President Chavez wins a fourth term in office, with 54% of the vote on an official turnout at about 81%. Opposition leader Henrique Capriles concedes.
April, 2013	President Chavez passed away from cancer during his fourth term, leaving Nicolas Maduro as his chosen successor. Maduro wins the office by a narrow margin with the opposition contesting the results.
November, 2013	Despite opposition still contesting results, Maduro is granted special power for a year due to hyperinflation, prompting several protests from opposition supporters.
12 February, 2014 - 8 May, 2014	Protests erupt, along with several arrests and killings of student protestors, leading to Maduro's oppositions' involvement. The 2014 Venezuelan protests resulted in at least 4,000 arrests, 5,000 injuries and 43 deaths, including people from both political sides.
November, 2014	Government cuts public spending again, as oil prices reach a four-year low.
December, 2015	Opposition wins supermajority of the Venezuelan parliamentary election, marking the worst electoral period for the Socialist movement first started by Hugo Chavez in 16 years.

- February, 2016 President Maduro announces measures aimed at fighting the economic crisis, including currency devaluation and first petrol price rise in 20 years.
- September, 2016 Hundreds of thousands of people take part in a protest in Caracas calling for the removal of President Maduro, accusing him of responsibility for the economic crisis.
- 31 March, 2017 - 12 August, 2017 Protests erupt yet again under Maduro's administration, stemming from the array of arrests of opposition political leaders and the cancellation of dialogue between Maduro and the opposition. This is compounded with the dissolution of the opposition-led National Assembly, escalating the protests and eventually turning them deadly. A total of 165 deaths, 15,000+ injuries and at least 4,500 arrests end the months-long protest with a new Constituent National Assembly, largely supporting the Maduro administration established, despite rampant protests.
- May, 2018 President Maduro wins his second term in the office, though this has been greatly contested by oppositions and remains in question today.
- August, 2018 President Maduro announces a 95% devaluation of the Bolivar, renaming it the 'sovereign bolivar', in another attempt to contain the hyperinflation still running rampant, now at 1 million percent a year. Maduro links the new, devalued bolivar to the government's cryptocurrency, the petro.
- 10 January, 2019 The supposed inauguration of Nicolas Maduro for a second term in the office is disputed by the opposition's claim to the presidency. Juan Guaido is proposed to take the office by the opposition side and is widely supported by the international community. The presidential crisis continues.
- 10 January, 2019 - 16 November, 2019 Protests erupt once again, this time in response to the political and presidential crisis. Protestors gather in support of Juan Guaido and call for the resignation of Nicolas Maduro, starting the transition from authoritarian to democratic with the creation of a transitional government. Protests dissolve with at least 100 deaths, 500 injuries and approximately 1000 arrests, due to the sudden COVID-19 pandemic.
- 30 April, 2019 'Operation Freedom' commences--an uprising supported by military personnel and civilians in support of Juan Guaido. The uprising ended unsuccessfully, with the army remaining loyal to Maduro and the National Assembly Vice President

arrested. 4 civilian deaths, 230 injuries and 205 arrests were made in one single day.

13 March, 2020	The first few cases of COVID-19 are confirmed in Venezuela.
16 March, 2020	President Maduro requests a US\$5 billion grant from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to combat the pandemic, citing reasons such as a lack of medical resources due to international sanctions. The request was denied.
17 March, 2020	President Maduro announces a national lockdown, initially until 12 May, only to be extended until the first of June. Colombia closes its border with Venezuela, followed closely behind by Brazil.
October, 2020	The Maduro Government signs a contract with Russia, receiving approximately 2000 Russian vaccines ahead of the 10 million dose shipment. President Maduro announced that candidates of the upcoming parliamentary election, as well as his own son, will be receiving the Russian vaccine.
November, 2020	Government restrictions cause Doctors without Borders to temporarily suspend operations in Caracas, leaving about 150 doctors without jobs and a tentative frontline against COVID-19.

Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

- RMRP 2021
- S/PV.8452 Meeting records on the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (26/Jan/2019)
- S/PV.8506 meeting records on the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with their representative present (10/Apr/2019)
- S/2019/186 draft resolution from the USA, vetoed by China and Russia
- S/2019/190 draft resolution from the Russian Federation, (4/7/4, fail)

Possible Solutions

Stabilising political crisis and preventing government corruption through declaration of one leader of the country, rather than having a constant push and pull between two parties. The current major issue at hand is the presidential crisis, with Venezuela and the international community

torn between two candidates for up to 3 years now. One presidential term in Venezuela lasts for 6 years, meaning that Venezuela has been without an internationally recognised president for half a term. Many of the social and hence, humanitarian, issues arise from the presidential crisis: President Maduro seeks to cement his power and to further his ideologies through brute force, which, increasingly so, has involved public violence as well as corruption and illegal actions such as extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, as well as the oppression of opposing political members through sentencing. In order to solve this issue, it seems to be counterintuitive to delay on declaring a clear presidential election winner. To do this, the house can either decide on one presidential candidate as winner based on previous data, or to vote on a re-election as to overthrow the 2018 'corrupt' presidential election. However, previous attempts at resolving the political crisis only led to the P5 nations exercising their veto rights in favor of the administration they support, as Russia and China are on opposing sides to the rest of the P5 nations.

Reducing hyperinflation through consulting previous actions taken by other countries who have undergone similar degrees of hyperinflation. Venezuela is not the first country to have gone through hyperinflation--in fact, the magnitude of Venezuela's hyperinflation has not yet topped charts in the history of hyperinflation, though its longevity has. This does mean that there have been past solutions to each country's hyperinflation period, meaning that Venezuela does have resources to refer to when trying to resolve its economic crisis. It is important for thorough evaluation of each method on a case-by-case basis, as each country's individual circumstances are all different. Therefore, Venezuela should work in cooperation with countries who have previously gone through hyperinflation in order to assess the situation and to aid it before its economy freefalls even further.

Decreasing crude oil dependency. The main reason behind the Venezuelan economic crisis was their dependency on crude oil revenue. As their economy starts to stabilise in the future, it will become imperative to consider other forms of national income source, rather than going back to crude oil dependency. This is especially important going forward, as more and more nations are starting to abandon non-renewable energy sources, such as crude oil, and going 'green'. The government should start to consider expanding their other markets, such as tourism.

Stabilising humanitarian crisis, including emphasis on eliminating/internalising shortages. Works with other governments and international organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) can prove to be key in the stabilisation of the humanitarian crisis. There are international entities who have been willing to provide resources as well as humanitarian aid in Venezuela's time of instability, however, the Venezuelan government has all but accepted, or even acknowledged, the need for help. As the world descends further into the COVID-19 pandemic, a collapsing Venezuelan economy as well as healthcare force will require even more aid and support than ever before. However, each country will be focused on their own nation's wellbeing and welfare, hence, it is suggested that Venezuela setup ties with organisations, rather than nations.

One solution to the issue of facilitating cooperation with the aforementioned international organisations includes the increase of aid and security by the Venezuelan government. For example, it could facilitate the provision through working with international humanitarian organisations of food, medicines and other supplies vital for saving human lives, by relaxing imports and exchange controls, and ceasing the persecution of those seeking to alleviate suffering. It could also agree to the formation of the tripartite group proposed by humanitarian organizations, comprising representatives of the state, civil society and specialized UN bodies, and having no agenda other than coordinating the provision of humanitarian assistance, based on principles of strict neutrality.

Assistance from the UN in order to tackle the migration crisis. Another solution could be gaining assistance from the UN itself. The UN should follow up on Secretary-General António Guterres's commitment to provide assistance to Venezuela's neighbours to help them cope with the migration crisis; it should also provide clear and public information on issues such as health, welfare and social programs. Furthermore, Venezuela's neighbours should work with multilateral bodies, particularly the UN, to ensure the needs of migrants are adequately met and those at risk of trafficking, including women and girls, are protected as best possible.

Finally, it is recommended for Colombia to adapt its migration law and regulations governing educational and health services to eliminate bureaucratic obstacles to their provision for migrants.

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