

# Is It Time for “Food Diplomacy” in Venezuela?

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*The convincing victory of Venezuela’s governing socialist party in this weekend’s elections provides a convenient opportunity for **President Maduro** to finally request food aid from his Russian and Chinese partners, both of whom would be more than eager to receive the soft power boost that would come with easing the humanitarian suffering that the US’ Hybrid War and related sanctions have placed on the Venezuelan people.*

The United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) came out on top during this weekend’s [regional elections](#), even though its victory predictably produced [unsubstantiated allegations](#) of fraud by the opposition. Although there’s a chance of anti-government violence, the average Venezuelan appears exhausted by the unrest that’s shaken their country over the years, hence why the majority of voters chose to support the PSUV in order to preserve peace and stability in the country. This has placed President Maduro in a more solid position than at any other time since the [Hybrid War](#) on Venezuela [began in earnest](#) in early 2014, which will therefore allow him to push forth his constitutional reform agenda with less resistance than before.

That being said, this also means that he needs to deliver on his promises to improve the living situation for the Venezuelans who have been suffering from a lack of food and other basic commodities, since this has not only contributed to the worsening of Venezuela’s international reputation, but it also provides the opposition with an excellent opportunity to recruit new [Color Revolution](#) followers into its ranks. At the same time, however, the Venezuelan government appears reluctant to recognize that this problem does indeed exist in some parts of the country, no doubt over-amplified by the international media for infowar purposes but nevertheless still present to some extent. It’s debatable whether external US economic pressure or internal government mismanagement is more to blame for this, but regardless of the cause, the symptoms need to be addressed, and now is the best time for Maduro to do so.

## **Trump’s Threats**

Trump’s mid-August [refusal to rule out](#) a conventional “military option” in the Hybrid War on Venezuela was a godsend to the country’s government because it confirmed what they’d been saying for years, namely that the US is intent on carrying out a regime change in the oil-rich country using whatever possible means at its disposal, including an Iraq-like invasion. It can’t be known for certain whether this is exactly what Trump had in mind or not, but the fact remains that Maduro was able to masterfully make it seem like this was the case, which also had the effect of implying that the opposition’s Color Revolution vanguard was the “tip of the spear” in this campaign. It’s little wonder then that the government won in the last elections, as the implication of voting for an American-linked opposition coalition in light of the US President’s formal threats against their country proved to be too traitorous

of a thought for some anti-government Venezuelans.

The intensification of Venezuela's siege mentality as a result of Trump's bellicose statement a few months ago, his [melodramatic speech at the UN](#), and the [ever-present sanctions](#) allow Maduro to now conveniently shift all the blame for his country's economic problems onto the US, jettisoning any responsibility for them and opening up a whole new range of options for dealing with the Hybrid War against his country. Whereas in the past he and his government were uncomfortable with recognizing the humanitarian consequences of this asymmetrical conflict because of the fear that this admission could be repackaged into yet another infowar weapon to discredit the authorities and influence the upcoming elections, no such pressure exists now that the PSUV convincingly won the last elections and the US has proven itself without a doubt to have a pressing interest in carrying out a regime change in the country at all costs.

## **Petro Politics**

The US doesn't just want to acquire control over the [world's largest oil reserves](#) in the Orinoco River Basin for the sake of it, whether to use for its own needs or to control the flow of this resource to its global Chinese competitor, but because this might be the only option left to save the petrodollar. With the US' Saudi partner increasingly pivoting towards [Russia and China](#), there's a [very real chance](#) that Riyadh will [soon conduct](#) all new energy contracts in local currencies in order to bypass the dollar, which would slash the Achilles' heel of the US-led global economic system and herald in the biggest worldwide financial change since Washington completely abandoned the gold standard in 1971. It's not for naught, then, that [Russia](#) and [China](#) have been [stockpiling gold](#) over the past couple of years, as they prudently forecast that this moment might arrive sometime in the near future.

The grand strategic consequences of this would be that the US would finally lose control over the globalization processes that it first helped initiate and eventually harnessed in becoming the sole post-Cold War superpower, thereby enabling China's Silk Road globalization to replace its Western rival in formalizing the start of the [Multipolar World Order](#). The US is desperate to prevent this from happening, hence why it needs a "backup plan" in guaranteeing that the dollar will still be used for a sizeable percentage of transactions in the international energy marketplace, and this is precisely where Venezuela fits into the equation. If the US' "[Operation Condor 2.0](#)" series of hemispheric regime changes succeeds in toppling the PSUV, then the resultant geopolitical chain reaction would probably lead to the fall of the ALBA-allied [Bolivian](#) and [Nicaraguan](#) governments soon thereafter, which would evict multipolar influence from the South American heartland and preempt the game-changing construction of the Nicaraguan Canal, respectively.

Furthermore, and of heightened relevance to the petrodollar, it would complete the US' proxy conquest of Latin America's energy resources, providing Washington with the chance to pioneer a formidable rival to OPEC in the North American-South American Petroleum Exporting Countries ([NASAPEC](#)) structure that the author originally forecast at the end of last year. If all of the Western Hemisphere's resources were under the US' control via NASAPEC, then the petrodollar could survive long enough until the "Clash of Civilizations" [blueprint](#) for dividing and ruling the Eastern Hemisphere through Hybrid Wars succeeds in toppling the OPEC governments one by one and restoring the dollar as the preferred currency for conducting transactions. This explains why it's so important for the US to overthrow the

Chavismo government in Venezuela, and correspondingly, why Russia and China have an interest in preventing this.



## Russia To The Rescue

Having placed the Hybrid War on Venezuela into its grand geostrategic context, it's now time to talk about what the country's Russian and Chinese partners can realistically do to help it withstand this onslaught. There's no chance that either of them will commit military forces to assist the government, though Moscow will of course seek to leverage its "[military diplomacy](#)" in selling more arms and other defensive equipment to help Caracas ward off the US' threatened "humanitarian intervention". Ironically, though, a "humanitarian intervention" might just be what's needed in order to stop the Hybrid War on Venezuela, but it would have to be carried out by Russia and China and in an unconventional manner than what's commonly understood by this term.

Of these two Great Powers, Russia is [thought](#) to have established more influence in Venezuela due to its skillful maneuvers in the financial and energy industries, so it should be presumed that Moscow has the onus in taking the lead in any forthcoming 'multipolar humanitarian intervention' in Venezuela, though only if it's asked to do so by Caracas, which is the key point. Up until now, Maduro was reluctant to officially acknowledge the humanitarian consequences of the Hybrid War on Venezuela, but ever since Trump's track record of aggressive statements about his country over the past couple of months and the PSUV's victory over the weekend, he now has the "political flexibility" to do so in setting the stage for inviting his Great Power partners to assist in improving the humanitarian situation.

As opposed to the cruise missiles that typically accompany any unipolar "humanitarian intervention", its multipolar counterpart could see cargo ships of food and other basic commodities instead. After all, the new Russian Ambassador to the UN **Vasily Nebenzya** was proudly telling the Security Council just the other day about his country's [impressive humanitarian operations abroad](#), particularly in [Syria](#) and [Yemen](#), but to which [Qatar](#) could also be added when considering Russia's offer earlier this summer to send food to the blockaded country during Ramadan. Although the latter proposal was politely declined by Doha, the global soft power impact that it had greatly boosted Russia's reputation in the international Muslim community and paved the way for solidifying its "[Ummah Pivot](#)".

All of this is relevant for Venezuela because it means that Russia, but also China as well, would jump at the first opportunity to relieve the humanitarian suffering that the US is to a large degree responsible for, both because it's the "right thing to do" but also because of the soft power masterstroke that it would be for enhancing the country's soft power all across Latin America just like the proposal to Qatar did for the Mideast. Unlike before when Maduro didn't want to officially recognize this problem because of the risk that it could embolden another Color Revolution wave and sway the upcoming elections, he might change his mind now that his party's political position is much more secured and even gain populist points by framing the whole "humanitarian operation" as a multipolar response to the US' Hybrid War on Venezuela.



Russian Rosneft oil company CEO Igor Sechin signs a deal with Venezuela Oil Minister Eulogio del Pino in the presence of President Maduro, July 2016

As a result, the protest-prone and opposition-aligned segments of the population who propelled the anti-government parties to victory in the [late-2015 parliamentary elections](#) could be placated so long as they steadily receive food and basic commodities, thereby opening up a valuable window of opportunity for the PSUV to “win them back” to the Chavista fold and dramatically de-escalate the regime change campaign in the country.

## Concluding Thoughts

The US’ incessant efforts to overthrow the Venezuelan government might finally be reaching a turning point, though not the one that its strategic planners forecasted. Instead of the latest elections resulting in another bout of Color Revolution unrest just like the last two, this time the vote proceeded peacefully and the ruling PSUV produced a convincing victory, thereby freeing President Maduro from the “political constraints” that had previously prevented him from formally recognizing the deteriorating humanitarian situation in parts of the country. Accordingly, given how Trump has unabashedly admitted that he wants to see a regime change in Venezuela, and the [CIA](#) hinted as much earlier this summer too, the stage is now set for Maduro to “save face” by blaming everything on the US and finally requesting humanitarian assistance from his Russian and Chinese partners.

These two Great Powers would be more than happy to help their Latin American ally, both for good-hearted humanitarian reasons and also the obvious boost that this would provide to their soft power appeal in the region, but there’s another motivation for all of this too, and it has to do with the multipolar world’s grand strategy to de-dollarize the global energy trade. So long as Venezuela’s people remain content and less susceptible to Color Revolution intrigue, then there’s less of a likelihood that they could inadvertently play into the US’ plans by handing their oil-rich country over to its northern neighbor via opposition proxy, which in that scenario would allow the petrodollar to hang onto life if OPEC leader Saudi Arabia begins de-dollarizing its oil sales as it progressively moves closer to Russia and China.

As crude as it may sound, providing the Hybrid War-victimized population with a full belly and reliable access to basic commodities might be all that’s needed to turn the tide against the regime change movement and stabilize the beleaguered country, which in turn could increase the odds that the multipolar de-dollarization plan would succeed in inflicting a crippling blow to the petrodollar. For these reasons, it’s not inconceivable that Maduro might request humanitarian aid from his Russian and Chinese partners in countering the socio-economic consequences that the US’ asymmetrical war has had on some of the poorer segments of his country’s population. Instead of “classical” or even “military diplomacy”, it might ultimately turn out that “food diplomacy” was all that was needed this entire time to thwart the US’ clandestine Color Revolution campaign.

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