

Power Play: The U.S. and Canada back a Coup in Venezuela

By [Michael Welch](#), [Radhika Desai](#), [Nino Pagliccia](#), and [Lucas Koerner](#)

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Region: [Canada](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Oil and Energy](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“Never before has a high-level official said that the opposition should overthrow the government... this has no historic comparison in the 200 years of US-Venezuela relations.”

- President Nicolás Maduro, January 23, 2019 [1]

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America’s [long sought goal](#) of regime change in Venezuela may be on the verge of being realized.

Thanks in large part to low oil commodity prices and U.S. economic sanctions imposed in 2017, an economic crisis has devastated the country. [2] Accusations of fraudulent elections have helped generate a rhetorical case that President Maduro is a “dictator” and a “usurper.” [3]

Boosted by [distorted and biased press coverage](#), and hostile language [from the U.S.](#) and Organization of American States’ hawkish [Secretary-General Luis Almagro](#), the Venezuelan opposition made their move on January 11, 2019. One day after Nicolás Maduro had been [sworn in](#) to his second term of office as president, the opposition controlled National Assembly declared Maduro to be illegitimate and appointed a relative unknown, opposition legislator Juan Gerardo Guaidó Márquez, to be their interim president, until fair elections could be conducted. [4]

January 23rd, on a day when Venezuelans commemorate the historic overthrow of military dictator Marcos Evangelista Pérez Jiménez, national demonstrations rose up across Venezuela, both in support of and in opposition to Maduro’s reign. At an opposition protest in Caracas, Juan Guaidó announced that he was assuming the role of Head of State. [5]

Shortly afterward, as if on cue, U.S. President Trump officially recognized Juan Guaidó as interim President of Venezuela. A number of countries including Canada, Brazil, Columbia, and other members of the so-called Lima Group would quickly follow suit. [6]

A certain threshold has been crossed. Following a [short-lived mutiny by National Guardsmen](#) in the Venezuelan capital, high ranking military officials have pledged their fealty to Maduro. Outbreaks of violence have erupted in Venezuela with [estimates of between 14 and 26 casualties](#). Maduro has [ended diplomatic relations with the U.S.](#) and has ordered all U.S. diplomats out of the country by Sunday January 27th. Russia, China, Turkey, Cuba, and Iran have all expressed their support for Maduro as the country's rightful leader. On Saturday January 26th, during [tense deliberations at the United Nations](#), Russia outright accused the U.S. of engineering the Venezuelan coup d'etat. [7][8]

With so much at stake for the country's population, the region and potentially the world, it is essential to get an honest picture of the events as they unfold, and the historical and geopolitical context in which they take place. Venezuela wouldn't be the first and likely won't be the last nation to suffer a tremendous toll from an intervention that is prettied up as a "humanitarian" mission of mercy.

On this week's Global Research News Hour, we got hold of guests who can help fill in the blanks left by mainstream media coverage of the Venezuelan crisis, put some facts on the table, and try to project where this crisis is headed.

In our first half hour, Caracas-based journalist Lucas Koerner brings an on-the-ground perspective on the lead up to last week's events, provides some background on Juan Guaidó, shares his take on the unity of the Venezuelan military behind Maduro, and makes an educated guess as to where events are leading in coming days.

In our second half hour we hear from Professor Radhika Desai and Venezuela-Canadian writer and activist Nino Pagliccia. In a round table conversation with host Michael Welch, these observers discuss the inauguration of Maduro, which Desai attended in person, the cracks in the National Assembly's claims of Maduro's unconstitutional assumption of power, the motives behind America's and Canada's advocacy for the Venezuelan opposition, the prospects for Russia and other powers to block U.S. hegemony, and how the situation is likely to evolve in coming months.

Lucas Koerner is a journalist and staff-writer with [Venezuelanalysis.com](#). He is based in Caracas, Venezuela.

Radhika Desai is Professor at the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba and a Director of the Geopolitical Economy Research Group based at that university. She has authored a number of books including [Geopolitical Economy: After US Hegemony, Globalization and Empire \(2013\)](#) published by Fernwood. She is also a member of the Winnipeg based Venezuela Peace Committee.

Nino Pagliccia is an activist and freelance writer based in Vancouver. He is a retired researcher from the University of British Columbia, Canada. He is a Venezuelan-Canadian who follows and writes about international relations with a focus on the Americas. He is the editor of the book ["Cuba Solidarity in Canada - Five Decades of People-to-People Foreign Relations"](#) (2014). He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

Note: In Winnipeg, a solidarity action is scheduled to take place Saturday January 26th in front of the U.S. Consulate in Winnipeg at 201 Portage Avenue (North-west corner of Portage and Main). Organized by Peace Alliance Winnipeg and the Venezuela Peace Committee.

For solidarity actions around the globe, visit the site for the Alliance for Global Justice (afgj.org)

(Global Research News Hour Episode 246)

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The [Global Research News Hour](#) airs every Friday at 1pm CT on [CKUW 95.9FM](#) in Winnipeg. The programme is also podcast at globalresearch.ca . Excerpts of the show have begun airing on [Rabble Radio](#) and appear as podcasts at rabble.ca.

The Global Research News Hour now airs Fridays at 6pm PST, 8pm CST and 9pm EST on Alternative Current Radio (alternativecurrentradio.com)

Community Radio Stations carrying the Global Research News Hour:

CHLY 101.7fm in Nanaimo, B.C - Thursdays at 1pm PT

Boston College Radio [WZBC 90.3FM NEWTONS](#) during the Truth and Justice Radio Programming slot - Sundays at 7am ET.

[Port Perry Radio](#) in Port Perry, Ontario -1 Thursdays at 1pm ET

[Burnaby Radio Station CJSF out of Simon Fraser University](#). 90.1FM to most of Greater Vancouver, from Langley to Point Grey and from the North Shore to the US Border.

It is also available on 93.9 FM cable in the communities of SFU, Burnaby, New Westminister, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Surrey and Delta, in British Columbia, Canada. - Tune in at its new time - Wednesdays at 4pm PT.

Radio station [CFUV 101.9FM](#) based at the University of Victoria airs the Global Research News Hour every Sunday from 7 to 8am PT.

[CORTES COMMUNITY RADIO CKTZ 89.5](#) out of Manson's Landing, B.C airs the show Tuesday mornings at 10am Pacific time.

[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](#) serving the [Cowichan Lake](#) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 6am pacific time.

Campus and community radio [CFMH 107.3fm](#) in Saint John, N.B. airs the Global Research News Hour Fridays at 10am.

Caper Radio CJBW 107.3FM in Sydney, [Cape Breton](#), Nova Scotia airs the Global Research News Hour starting Wednesday Morning from 8:00 to 9:00am. Find more details at www.caperradio.ca

RIOT RADIO, the visual radio station based out of [Durham College](#) in Oshawa, Ontario has begun airing the Global Research News Hour on an occasional basis. Tune in at dcstudentsinc.ca/services/riot-radio/

Radio Fanshawe: [Fanshawe's 106.9 The X \(CIXX-FM\)](#) out of London, Ontario airs the Global Research News Hour Sundays at 6am with an encore at 4pm.

Los Angeles, California based Thepowerofvoices.com airs the Global Research News Hour every Monday from 6-7pm Pacific time.

Notes:

1. <https://venezuelanalysis.com/news/14243>
2. <https://www.globalresearch.ca/venezuela-under-siege-the-wests-ongoing-campaign-against-president-maduro/5657804>
3. Juan Guaido (January 15, 2019), 'Juan Guaido: Maduro is a Usurper. It's time to Restore Democracy in Venezuela', Washington Post; https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/01/15/maduro-is-usurper-its-time-restore-democracy-venezuela/?utm_term=.6a849fe7ec8c
4. Tom Phillips (January 11, 2019), 'Venezuela: opposition leader declares himself ready to assume presidency', The Guardian; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/11/venezuela-maduro-juan-guaido-assume-presidency>
5. Richard Vaz (January 23, 2019), 'Venezuelan Opposition Leader Guaido Declares Himself President, Recognized by US and Allies'; <https://venezuelanalysis.com/news/14244>
6. *ibid*
7. Richard Vaz (January 24, 2019), 'Venezuela: Several Casualties as Violence Erupts'; <https://venezuelanalysis.com/news/14250>
8. Andrew Roth, Lily Kuo, David Agren, Ed Augustin, Peter Walker and agencies (January 24, 2019), 'Russia and key allies vow to stand by Maduro in Venezuela crisis', The Guardian; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/24/juan-guaido-venezuelas-opposition-leader-declares-himself-interim-president>

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