

Solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution! Defeat the Imperialist Conspiracy Against Venezuela!

By [Canadian Peace Congress](#)
Global Research, July 29, 2017
Canadian Peace Congress

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

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#), [Terrorism](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Dear friends,

Like so many friends of the Bolivarian Revolution across Canada and around the world, the Canadian Peace Congress is alarmed at the intensifying campaign being orchestrated by the privileged monopoly circles within Venezuela and by their imperialist sponsors internationally – including Canada – to foment economic chaos and political violence to make the country ungovernable and bring about a reactionary coup d'état. If the attempt at internal counter-revolution fails, plans are being put in place for direct military intervention by the United States, possibly under the cover of the Organization of American States (OAS).

This of course is not the first time internal reaction and its foreign backers have attempted 'regime change', but this is the most concerted, all-sided assault ever. The right-wing forces are taking advantage of the increasingly difficult economic position facing Venezuela, arising from the sharp decline in world prices for oil resources, the export of which generates most of Venezuela's hard-currency earnings.

For the past several months, US imperialism and its allies domestically and internationally have been exacerbating Venezuela's economic difficulties by attacking its international credit rating (making foreign loans increasingly expensive), by weakening the foreign exchange value of the national currency through purposeful speculation, and by withholding basic commodities needed by the people (but whose distribution is still controlled by private monopolies), such as milk, coffee, rice, oil, and basic necessities like toilet paper, toothpaste and medicines. The intention of this economic warfare is clear: to create shortages and imbalances in the domestic economy and to increase the misery of working people in the hope of eroding popular support for the Maduro government and for the Bolivarian Revolution as a whole.

This economic 'softening-up' of Venezuela – very similar to the imperialist tactics used against the Allende government in Chile before the Pinochet coup of September 1973 – has been combined with a campaign of increasingly violent protests in Caracas and some other urban centres. Armed thugs mingle with other civilian protesters and launch violent attacks on security forces, especially after sunset. Schools, childcare facilities, hospitals and food banks have also been ransacked.

Finally, the enemies of Venezuela are using various diplomatic venues such as the OAS to undermine internal support and international solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution,

spreading lies about 'brutal repression' against 'unarmed pro-democracy protests' by the Maduro government. Canada has played a particularly shameful role in whipping up this propaganda offensive against Venezuela in the OAS.



For its part, the Venezuelan government has been very restrained in its response to the increasingly violent provocations from the right-wing forces. Instead, it has come forward with a proposal to form a new *Constituency Assembly* - composed of elected representatives from throughout the country, and from all sectors of society, including workers, peasants & farmers, indigenous communities, women, youth & students, religious circles, business, and the political opposition - to develop a vision and constitutional framework in line with the wishes of the vast majority of the Venezuelan people.

The domestic right-wing forces, and the imperialist circles backing them, have viciously denounced this proposal for a new Constituency Assembly, precisely because it would demonstrate incontrovertibly that the majority of the people back the Bolivarian process first elaborated by former **President Hugo Chavez Frias**. That is why they are desperate to overturn this proposal before it can take flight. This Sunday, July 30, the elections for the Constituency Assembly will take place, and the right-wing opposition are gearing up to make these elections impossible to conduct. Failing that, they will denounce them as "undemocratic", as a prelude to a violent overthrow of the government and the seizure of power.

In such circumstances, it is absolutely vital that progressive and peace-loving people and organizations across the country speak out now against this impending coup d'état. We urge everyone to be on the alert, and move quickly to organize emergency actions and protests in such a catastrophic event. The Canadian Peace Congress and its members and supporters will reach out and work in unity with all those in defence of the Bolivarian Revolution, and against imperialist interference or aggression under any guise.

Hands Off Venezuela!!

Below is a file outlining in detail recent US actions against Venezuela. Also, for those in Greater Toronto, we urge you to come out and support the "Beats for Peace" solidarity event this Sunday evening. Similar events, including solidarity rallies are also being organized in centres across the country.



RECENT US ACTIONS AGAINST VENEZUELA

- I. On July 26th, the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the US Department of the Treasury added 13 Venezuelan high-level officials to the OFAC's SDN List, as part of a new set of unilateral sanctions against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
- II. Last July 20, 2017, CIA Director Mike Pompeo answered a question posed by Venezuelan Vanessa Neumann as follows:

"At any time you have a country as large and with the economic capacity of a country like Venezuela, America has a deep interest in making sure that it is stable, as democratic as possible. And so, we're working hard to do that, I am always careful when we talk about South and Central America and the CIA, there's a lot of stories. (Laughter)

MR. POMPEO: So I want to be careful with what I say but suffice to say, we are very hopeful that there can be a transition in Venezuela and we the CIA is doing its best to understand the dynamic there, so that we can communicate to our State Department and to others. The Colombians, I was just down in

Mexico City and in Bogota a week before last talking about this very issue trying to help them understand the things they might do so that they can get a better outcome for their part of the world and our part of the world.”

<http://aspensecurityforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-View-from-Langley.pdf>

III. Last July 23, 2017, the U.S. Embassy to Caracas published in its internet website a security alert that in a scaremonger manner advises “taking appropriate preparatory measures, including gathering enough food and water for 72 hours” (our italics). Further, such communiqué recognizes that they deem violent the protests that in other spaces and opportunities they consider peaceful: “Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence.”

IV. In a White House Statement, President Donald Trump threatened Venezuela as he said: “If the Maduro regime imposes its Constituent Assembly on July 30, the United States will take strong and swift economic actions.”

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/07/17/statement-president-donald-j-trump>

V. In an official communiqué, the Spokesperson of the Department of State attempted to legitimise the results of the opposition consultation exercise of July 16th, which lack any legitimacy as they cannot be audited whilst she urged the Venezuelan Government to “abandon” the National Constituent Assembly, and requested the intervention of other countries to press Venezuela for such purposes. The statement reads: “The vote by millions of Venezuelans was an unequivocal affirmation in support of free and fair elections as well as respect for the existing constitution.” (...) “We encourage governments in the hemisphere and around the world to call on **President Maduro** to suspend this process which only seeks to undermine democracy in Venezuela.” (...) “As the President stated earlier today, the United States is prepared to take strong and swift economic actions if the Government of Venezuela proceeds with the National Constituent Assembly action.”

<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/07/272645.htm>

VI. This year alone, over and above one hundred hostile statements have been issued or uttered by U.S. government spokespersons and by U.S. Congress members. Among those causing most concern to Venezuela for they entail U.S. aggression against our country are listed below:

- On April 6, 2017, **Admiral Jefe Kurt Tidd**, Head of Southern Command in his Southern Command annual report mentioned Venezuela in his written testimony before the U.S. Senate Armed Service Committee as follows:

“Overall the region is stable, although the gap between public expectations and government performance manifests itself in social protests, most often against corruption and mismanagement of public resources Bolivian citizens have engaged in mass protests to demand resolution to a severe water shortage, while Venezuela faces significant instability in the coming year due to widespread food, and medicine shortages; continued political uncertainty; and a worsening economic situation. The growing humanitarian crisis in Venezuela could eventually compel a regional response.” (Our underlining and italics).

Even though he did not talk of concrete actions and rejected that any action was being planned against Venezuela, it is noteworthy that Tidd takes for granted what John Kelly, Secretary of Homeland Security Department, a few years earlier, saw as a possibility of a “humanitarian crisis” to intervene Venezuela.

https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Tidd_04-06-17.pdf

- On June 6, 2017, U.S. Ambassador to the UNO, Nikki Haley carried out a fringe meeting in Geneva under the title “Human Rights and Democracy in Venezuela” aimed at attacking our country in the realm of multilateral organizations. Among other accusations this US. Government spokesperson described the Venezuelan government in the following terms:

“The Venezuelan government is in the midst of destroying human rights and democracy in Venezuela. It is conducting a campaign of violence and intimidation against unarmed demonstrators, businesses, civil society, and freely elected political opposition.”

and

“Since April, when demonstrations became a daily occurrence, more than 60 people have been killed. More than 1000 have been injured and nearly 3,000 have been detained, including over 300 civilians who are being charged criminally in military courts.” (our italics).

<https://geneva.usmission.gov/2017/06/06/ambassador-nikki-haley-remarks-on-venezuela-at-human-rights-council-sideevent/>

- On June 14, 2017, the **Secretary of State Tillerson** during the Department of State Budget Hearing at the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, answered a question posed by **Congressman Mario Díaz-Balart** as follows:

“With respect to Venezuela specifically, as you well know, it is extremely challenging there right now. I think we have made some important and significant progress within the OAS. We’re going to continue to use the OAS as a vehicle to advance pressure on the regime to return to its constitution, return to its called-for elections.”

“But we also have to work with the opposition to help the opposition become unified. That has been one of the great challenges of the past, is the opposition can’t seem to be of one voice.” (our italics and underlining).

<https://appropriations.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=394899>

- On June 22, 2017, U.S. **Vice President Mike Pence** was Guest Speaker at a Conversation at the Washington-based Wilson Center on U.S. Contribution to prosperity and security in Central America. After stating that “(...) Latin America 4 is a priority for the Trump Administration. (...) Our partnerships and alliances throughout the region are critical to our national interests (...).” Further, in

addressing the recently announced new policy towards Cuba, he said about Venezuela: “And rest assured, the United States of America will continue to support international efforts to restore freedom, democracy and the rule of law to Venezuela until freedom occurs.” (Our italics and underlining) (Min 19:00)

<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/105056065>

- On July 12, 2017, at The House of Representatives Western Hemisphere subcommittee hearing on “Advancing U.S. Interest in the Western Hemisphere: The FY 2018 Budget Request” USAID (a) Assistant Administrator, **Sarah-Ann Lynch** talked about the interventionist work performed by her agency in Venezuela:

“Yes, we have existing activities in Venezuela working with civil society organizations with — for U.S.-based NGOs here and then 30 to 35 NGOs in Venezuela.

We’ll continue to be working with those civil society organizations to increase awareness of what’s happening on the ground, to increase the ability to report on human right abuses, corruption, things of that nature.

We’re also working with the National Assembly to increase their ability to be legislators, doing training and capacity building there.

In addition, we’re doing assessments to the extent we can on the situation on the ground in the food area, in the economic area in the financial area, and putting together those assessments so that should there be an opportunity to do more we’ll be prepared to have a good response.”

<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing/subcommittee-hearing-advancing-u-s-interests-western-hemisphere-fy-2018-budget-request/>

VII. On January 13, 2017, **President Barack Obama** established “that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 with respect to the situation in Venezuela.” Effectively, that is the Executive Order allowing for the application of sanctions on the country, based on its description of Venezuela as an “unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States” pursuant to the National Emergency Law

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/13/letter-continuation-national-emergency-respect-venezuela>

VIII. On April 12, The U.S. Embassy to Caracas published a “Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Easter Week Protests / Demonstrations (12-17 April, 2017)”, containing a schedule with each of the demonstrations called by the opposition coalition (MUD), which per se is questionable because to convey an alert to U.S. citizens in Venezuela it is unnecessary to publish a calendar with the actions of the opposition scheduled. Further, the message reminded the U.S. citizens in Venezuela that “protests can occur without notice; that they can quickly develop and may result in violence”. Ironically, the public discourse was to condemn public order actions and to name it repression, as though they were disproportionate actions for peaceful demonstrations. This alert notice was eliminated from

Internet.

XIX. In 2017 alone, the United States has sanctioned Venezuela in two opportunities. Both of them in a unilateral manner, thus violating international law:

- On February 13, 2017. The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned **Vice President Tareck El Aissami** by listing him as a "Specially Designated National".

<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/pressreleases/Pages/as0005.aspx>

- On May 18, 2017, The OFAC further published the listing of 8 Magistrates of the Constitutional Division of the Supreme Court of Justice as "Specially Designated Nationals", which includes blocking assets and interactions with the USA (corporations and individuals). The Magistrates sanctioned are: **Luis Fernando Damiani Trujillo, Arcadio de Jesús Delgado Rosales, Gladys María Gutiérrez Alvarado, Juan José Mendoza Jover, Maikel José Moreno Pérez, Calixto Antonio Ortega Ríos, Lourdes Benicia Suárez Anderson, Carmen Auxiliadora Zuleta de Merchán.**

<https://www.treasury.gov/resourcecenter/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20170518.aspx>

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