

Trump's "Chaos Strategy" Has One Goal: To End Chavismo

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*Eight months after the presidential elections of May 2018, which confirmed **Nicolas Maduro** as winner with more than 6 million votes (67.8% and 46% of participation), the attempts of delegitimization of his government have multiplied in this month of January. Although democratically elected, the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is challenged by a part of the opposition... who refused to participate in the elections!*

January, the month of all resolutions

No offense to some, on January 10, the President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, officially took office. Immediately, the OAS (the Organization of American States) declared it "illegitimate" in a statement that was relentlessly relayed by the media. It is noteworthy that the OAS, based in Washington, is presided over by a **Luis Almagro** disowned by his own party in Uruguay as well as by all the progressive forces of the continent. Remarkably, the new government of **Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador** rejects the interference and sends a representative of Mexico to the nomination, while explaining that respect for sovereignty is a sacred principle governed by the Mexican Constitution.

The next day, before doing the same with the Government of Nicaragua, elected with 72% of the votes and 68% of voters participation, the OAS met to declare that the vote of more than 6 million Venezuelans in the elections of 2018 would have no value, contradicting observers as unlikely as former President Jimmy Carter, whose foundation participated in many electoral processes in Venezuela and called its system "the best in the world".

On January 15, the President of the National Assembly of Venezuela, **Juan Guaidó**, inaugurates his first meeting by pointing himself out as the main figure of the opposition and proposing, in the first item of the meeting, to declare the president Nicolas Maduro a "usurper". The second point? Encourage the military to a coup. Very ordinary indeed.

After the failed uprising of a group of soldiers on Monday, January 21, coinciding with the recent appeal to delegitimize the Government of Venezuela by the opposition's president in the National Assembly and the recurring threats of the United States, the opposition's and Chavistas marches were held Wednesday, January 23 in Caracas.

In the previous days, targeted violence erupted, such as the degrading of the Robert Serra Cultural Center, named in remembrance of the murder of a young Chavista deputy. On social networks, users shared the picture of a bust of Chavez hanging on a thread, symbol of a hate speech that does not spare the journalists either. Indeed, Madeleine Garcia, a reporter for TeleSUR, who has become known for her numerous political crisis coverage on the ground, is designated as a target for her supposed complicity with "the dictatorship".

The day before the march, 4 deaths were recorded in clashes and looting.

And now? It is not excluded that the opposition will take advantage of a new round of confrontations and violence to try another coup with the support of the international media through false information, as it was the case in April 2002. In this event, the United States may be ready to “help the people of Venezuela to restore democracy”.

The putschist tradition of the opposition

Since the death of **Hugo Chavez** on March 5, 2013, the opposition has resorted to all possible methods to avoid the continuity of Chavismo. Already in the first election of Nicolas Maduro against **Enrique Capriles**, he had called his constituents to go out in the street after the results proclaiming the advance of Maduro over him were made public. As a result 7 dead were recorded. This reaction would not be accepted in most countries, and the opposition that would do so would be guilty of a lack of ethics in the electoral process and the separation of powers. But whatever it does, regardless of the gravity and consequences that follow, the opposition in Venezuela seems to rely on the favors of the international public opinion.

Only a few months later, in late 2013, **Leopoldo Lopez**, leader of a party ranked on the far right of the political spectrum, openly launched a call for insurrection, “La Salida” (The exit). Following a pattern similar to that of the color revolutions in Eastern Europe, Lopez inaugurates a cycle of demonstrations presented as peaceful, by a media flood of “false information” that hides their true violent nature. As a result: 43 dead and more than 800 wounded. A few months after the failure of this coup attempt, President Barack Obama will intervene in early 2015 to activate a decree that considers Venezuela as an “exceptional threat to the national security of the United States.” This statement takes root in the traditional US interference in what its elites have considered since 1823 as its “backyard”, as was unambiguously established by the Monroe Doctrine.

In the parliamentary elections in December 2015, the opposition of Venezuela wins the majority of votes in the National Assembly for the first time since the election of Hugo Chavez. Although it raised the risk of electoral fraud in the weeks preceding the vote, the opposition does not dispute the outcome of the elections when they are the winners. However, following a few denunciations of irregularities, the Supreme Court of Justice invalidates the election of three opposition MPs who have benefited from a system based on purchase of votes. Despite the fact that according to the Constitution, the National Assembly is subject to the decisions of justice of the Supreme Court, its president at the time, Julio Borges, inaugurates the session by swearing in the deputies in question. Not content with taking office, the opposition says it will not implement decisions from the executive branch, considering that the government of Maduro is illegitimate and his days are numbered. Once again, the role the Constitution assigns to the National Assembly is to ensure the normal functioning of public policies by approving the general guidelines of the executive. Since then, the government accuses the opposition of having settled in a situation of “disobedience”.

Without taking a second of respite, 2016 was the year in which the economic situation decisively deteriorated in the country, mainly because of an economic model based on the dependence on the international price of exported oil. Attempts at stabilization within OPEC will be slow to achieve some results. At the same time, mechanisms of “economic warfare”,

like those carried out against Chile of Allende or Sandinista Nicaragua, have been observed, but they are minimized or even considered as a fallacious argument by critics of Chavism.

Still, financial sanctions have proliferated, and the arrival of Donald Trump at the end of 2016 is no exception. The Trump administration will return to the habit of its predecessors in regional politics, notably through the increasingly active role of the Organization of American States (OAS), but also by trying to involve the new right-wing governments in the region to collaborate in a collective attack against Venezuela, as evidenced by Mike Pence's three tours in Latin America and Mike Pompeo's more recent tour of Latin America.

In the spring of 2017, the opposition charged once more by repeating the 2014 scheme, and this time relying on the popular discontent that economic degradation should instill. The death toll is even heavier than during the last crisis, this time with 131 dead.

But this strategy proves to be a new failure. On the one hand, thanks to the governmental initiative of CLAP (Local Committees of Popular Supply) to face the difficulties of the population. On the other hand, the social measures continued, as evidenced by the delivery of two and a half million new housing units, as part of the "Gran Mision Vivienda" (Great Housing Mission) initiated in 2011. Above all, Maduro has had the audacity to stop this new cycle of violence by soliciting citizen participation via the call for a referendum in favor of a Constituent Assembly. It succeeded in mobilizing the population in favor of peace and a return to democratic normality.

Divided, the opposition then had to fall back on itself and was taken aback by this master stroke. Despite internal rivalries and indecision about the need to see its interests represented, the opposition has again taken refuge in a denial position following the announcement of the new presidential elections of 2018. Noting the popular support still enjoyed by Chavism, Trump then declared that the United States had a "military option" for Venezuela. Last year, US officials admitted that "Trump's government held secret meetings with rebel Venezuelan military to discuss plans to overthrow President Nicolás Maduro".

Chaos strategy for the Caribbean

After the flight abroad of many opposition figures targeted by an arrest warrant, such as Julio Borges and Antonio Ledezma, Venezuela is constantly confronted with a media campaign to instill the idea in the international public opinion that this country is a dictatorship.

The new president of the National Assembly of Venezuela, Juan Guaido, does not improvise when, on January 15, he inaugurates the first agenda of the National Assembly, with the objective of an "agreement on the declaration of the usurpation of the Presidency of the Republic and the application of the Constitution in order to restore it "in the first point, and a" Decree to grant Amnesty and Constitutional guarantees to those military and civilians who will help defend the Constitution "in the second one.

On Tuesday 23, in a blatant interference message, US **Vice President Mike Pence** encouraged some of the Venezuelan people to go out on the streets to "restore democracy and freedom." In other words, to destroy Venezuela, like other countries of the South. After so many interventions, would the perfect democracy that the United States wishes to see emerge be similar to that of Ukraine, Honduras, Libya or Afghanistan? At this point, it is no secret that UN multilateralism is not to the taste of the United States. The illusion that some

have had in the management of President Obama has broken into a thousand pieces. His promise to close Guantanamo was a smoke screen.

In many European countries, Venezuela has served as a scarecrow to scare voters, making those who are tempted by a progressive candidate believe that the Bolivarian experience did not benefit their people. By acting in a caricatural manner, the international right wing and its media relays have deliberately concealed the undeniable facts when it comes to the reduction of social inequalities that characterized the Venezuelan government's policy, such as the right to housing or education. Focusing on the reality of economic problems and its sensationalist aspects, instead of trying to explain the complex reasons for this situation, the media have fabricated the image of a Venezuela plunged into chaos for political ends.

The political opposition of Venezuela, now represented by Juan Guaido, does not only welcome openly any external support, namely the tradition that has become the interference, but it depends on it to survive! That the EU, the French government and others are so clearly opposed to international law and the sovereignty on which peace depends as well as full respect for human rights should be of great concern to us.

When some media take up for themselves the self-proclamation of an opponent in Venezuela who denies the separation of powers and the Constitution, and justifies his call for insurrection for external support, this is not called information, but propaganda war. Humanity is experiencing serious challenges. The right to fair and objective information is everyone's business. After so many wars and coups d'état made possible by our governments and whose record is never established, the expression of solidarity between indignant, rebellious, red / yellow vests, home-grown resistants and the people of America under threat is the least of the possibilities we have left.

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