



Brussels, 31 August 2016

Ms. Federica Mogherini
Vice-President of the European Commission /
High Representative of the Union for
Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
European External Action Service
Rue de la Loi, 200
B-1049 Brussels

cc: Mr. Christos Stylianides, Commissioner on Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management
Mr. Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament

Dear Vice-President/High Representative,

Further to the Resolution of the European Parliament of 8th June 2016 (2016/2699(RSP)), and your interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, the situation in this country continues to deteriorate in each and every aspect contemplated in aforementioned Resolution as well as in the recommendations you transmitted to the Venezuelan Government via Mrs Rodríguez Gómez.

Far from taking measures to normalise the democratic functioning of the country, putting an end to the institutional manipulation, the Government of President Nicolás Maduro persists in its attitude of blocking the legislative capacity of the National Assembly, systematically invalidating its decisions, through the fraudulent use of the Judicial Power with the collusion of the National Electoral Council. The separation of powers in Venezuela today does not exist.

The Human Rights situation deserves special attention. Not only have the political prisoners not been freed, but also the number of people imprisoned for political reasons has increased from 98 prisoners at the date of the Resolution of the Parliament, to 120 as at today. The opponent Leopoldo López has received confirmation of a sentence condemning him to 14 years in jail. Instead of accepting the invitation to respect the right of the Venezuelan people to protest peacefully, political repression has intensified. In this regard and with the call for a national protest on 1st September, with the objective of demanding the establishment of a date for Presidential Recall Referendum contemplated in the Constitution, President Maduro has declared “You saw what happened in Turkey, didn’t you? Erdogan is going to look like a babe in arms.”

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The democratic opposition has fulfilled all of the procedures required by the current legislation for conducting the Referendum (included in the Regulations incorporated by ex-President Chavez in 2007), which is driving the call for protest on 1st September which the ruling party is threatening to repress. At the same time, on 23rd August, Nicolás Maduro has ordered the immediate dismissal of all civil servants who signed the petition requesting the Recall Referendum (about 19,000 civil servants).

On 13th June the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice of Venezuela declared as unconstitutional the “Special Law to Address the National Health Crisis”, approved by the National Assembly, alleging that “Parliament was encroaching on the powers attributed to the President in terms of the direction of Government action in the context of States of Emergency as well as international relations”. As a consequence, it is impossible to create a humanitarian corridor which would mitigate the tremendous shortage of food and the alarming lack of medicines and other medical supplies. Diosdado Cabello discarded the request for a humanitarian corridor for Venezuela, affirming that “accepting food and medicines from abroad would be an invasion of the Government of Nicolás Maduro”. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has expressed concern about the possibility of an imminent malaria epidemic in the country.

The incompetence of the Executive in putting an end to violence in the country is beating all records: 92% of all homicides are committed with impunity. In Caracas alone during the month of July, 535 corpses resulting from violent deaths were taken to the morgue and at the same time there were increases in all other cases of crimes (source: Venezuelan Violence Watch).

The dialogue that you yourself, the European Parliament as well as innumerable international authorities and personalities have requested has not been forthcoming. Despite the public posturing of wanting dialogue, the Venezuelan Executive is blocking it with constant obstacles and all the practical efforts in this regard of personalities such as the ex-President of the Spanish Government, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, and other former presidents of Latin American countries have thus far not borne any fruit.

All demands made by “international observers” designed to facilitate the establishment of mechanisms both humanitarian and for political and social dialogue that could give rise to a peaceful solution to the crisis are systematically ignored by the Government of Nicolás Maduro.

It is clear from the facts described that there has been deterioration in all aspects that have characterised Venezuela in recent years, taking into account the absolute lack of will on the part of the Venezuelan Government to resolve peacefully and constructively the serious political, economic and humanitarian crisis facing the country, and in light of the previous commitments made by the European institutions and yourself, with the objective of collaborating in resolving these problems.

The signatories, Members of the European Parliament, beg you to persist in your determination to get the fulfillment of the agreements approved in the latest Resolution of the European Parliament regarding the situation in Venezuela, including the European Parliament request for a EU delegation to be sent to Venezuela, communicating its importance to all the representatives and authorities involved in executing it.

At the same time we urge you to lead international efforts to find a sincere dialogue in the country and have a proactive role, jointly with regional organisations in the American continent, in the mediation of this crisis.

Sincerely,

Beatriz Becerra

Izaskun Bilbao

Frédérique Ries

Gérard Deprez

Javier Nart

Carolina Punset

María Teresa Gimenez Barbat

Ivan Štefanec

Lars Adaktusson

Fernando Ruas

Tunne Kelam

Ashley Fox

M^o Teresa Pagazaurtundúa

José Inácio Faria

Dita Charanzová

Marlene Mizzi

Gabriel Mato

Marietje Schaake

Charles Goerens

Eduard Kukan

Hilde Vautmans

Members of the European Parliament