

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 741

Condemning the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro in the Bolivarian
Republic of Venezuela.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 18, 2024

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Condemning the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro in
the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Whereas, since 2005, the United States has imposed targeted sanctions on individuals and entities of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela that have engaged in criminal, anti-democratic, unconstitutional, or corrupt acts and violated basic human rights;

Whereas, since 2006, the Secretary of State has determined that Venezuela is not “cooperating fully with United States anti-terrorism efforts” as outlined in section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2781);

Whereas, since coming to power in 2013, Nicolás Maduro and his illegitimate regime have committed numerous criminal, anti-democratic, unconstitutional, and corrupt acts and violated basic human rights, including—

(1) embezzling billions of dollars from the Venezuelan people, including through the illicit removal of gold from the Central Bank of Venezuela;

(2) declaring approximately 12 percent of the country to be a part of an “Orinoco Mining Arc” and using his position to oversee the exploitation of vital resources for personal gain; and

(3) establishing the Special Action Force of the National Police (FAES) in 2017, and utilizing them to execute illegal raids and extrajudicial killings;

Whereas, on January 5, 2019, the people of Venezuela responded to years of suffering and suppression under Nicolás Maduro by electing Juan Guaidó as President of the National Assembly of Venezuela, the only remaining democratically elected and legitimate institution in the country;

Whereas, upon being elected President of the National Assembly of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó invoked relevant articles of the Venezuelan constitution and became the Interim President of Venezuela;

Whereas, on January 10, 2019, Nicolás Maduro unlawfully reassumed the presidency of Venezuela, and his rule was deemed illegitimate by many Venezuelans and more than 50 countries, including most of the neighboring countries of Venezuela, the United States, and the majority of the European Union;

Whereas, since unlawfully reassuming the presidency in 2019, Nicolás Maduro has exacerbated ongoing economic and humanitarian crises, and forced more than 7,700,000 people to flee Venezuela;

Whereas Nicolás Maduro has provided diplomatic support to, and engaged with, countries that have been designated as state sponsors of terrorism under United States law, including by—

(1) allowing the Republic of Cuba to restructure the Venezuelan military, train armed forces in Venezuela, train Venezuelan intelligence agents in Cuba, and stating that Venezuela is “grateful to Cuba’s revolutionary armed forces” and “salute them and will always welcome them”;

(2) awarding a \$490,000,000 contract to the state-owned National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company to revamp the Paraguana Refining Center, the largest refining complex in Venezuela; and

(3) establishing a diplomatic mission and embassy in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (commonly known as “North Korea”) and allowing North Korea to similarly establish a mission and embassy in Venezuela;

Whereas, in response to the numerous criminal, anti-democratic, unconstitutional, and corrupt acts and basic human rights violations committed by Nicolás Maduro and persons serving in his illegitimate regime, the United States has imposed a number of sanctions on him and his enablers, including—

(1) on March 8, 2015, when President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13692 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property and suspending entry of certain persons contributing to the situation in Venezuela) to sanction persons engaged in public corruption activities and involved in human rights violations, the persecution of political opponents, the curtailment of press freedoms, and the arbitrary arrest and detention of anti-government protestors;

(2) on August 24, 2017, when President Donald Trump issued Executive Order 13808 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to the situation in Venezuela), which prohibited the Government of Venezuela from accessing financial markets of the United States;

(3) on March 19, 2018, when President Donald Trump issued Executive Order 13827 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to taking additional steps to address the situation in Venezuela) to prohibit any transaction involving the issuance of any Venezuelan digital currency;

(4) on May 21, 2018, when President Donald Trump issued Executive Order 13835 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to prohibiting certain additional transactions with respect to Venezuela) to prohibit transactions related to purchasing Venezuelan debt;

(5) on August 5, 2019, when President Donald Trump issued Executive Order 13884 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of the Government of Venezuela), freezing the assets of the Maduro government in the United States and blocking the property, imposing visa restrictions, and permitting financial sanctions on non-United States persons that assist the Maduro government; and

(6) under section 7031(c)(1)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Appropriations Act of 2019 (Public Law 116–6; 133 Stat. 317) and section 7031(c)(1)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Appropriations Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–94; 133 Stat. 2864);

Whereas, on October 17, 2023, the illegitimate Maduro regime signed the Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All (com-

monly known as the “Barbados Agreement”), which states that all parties, including the opposition party, shall be allowed to freely select their candidates for the presidential election;

Whereas the Biden Administration—

(1) on October 18, 2023, in response to the signing of the Barbados Agreement, issued General License No. 44 and suspended certain sanctions on Venezuela’s oil and gas sector; and

(2) allowed General License No. 44 to expire on April 18, 2024, in response the illegitimate Maduro regime preventing the democratic opposition from registering the candidate of their choice, harassing and intimidating political opponents, and unjustly detaining numerous political actors and members of civil society;

Whereas María Corina Machado—

(1) was elected by the people of Venezuela on October 26, 2023, as the opposition candidate to run against the illegitimate Maduro regime in the July 28, 2024, presidential election in Venezuela;

(2) was subsequently disqualified on January 26, 2024, by the Supreme Justice Tribunal, the highest court of Venezuela, from running in the election and was not provided the opportunity to respond to the disqualifying allegations in court; and

(3) has since endorsed Edmundo González Urrutia to run for President of Venezuela since her unwarranted disqualification, stating on the campaign trail, “We are united and strong”;

Whereas, on December 20, 2023, the Maduro regime finally released 6 wrongfully detained United States citizens in Venezuela only after the Biden Administration agreed to

release Alex Saab, who was charged in Federal court in October 2021, for laundering the proceeds of violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–213; 91 Stat. 1494) in connection with a scheme to pay bribes to take advantage of the exchange rate controlled by Venezuela;

Whereas the Department of State has described Saab as “one of the two most important money men in the Maduro government” and “the middle man” between Maduro’s narco-terrorist regime and the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Whereas, prior to his arrest, Saab established the illegal “Gold for Gas” scheme with Iran, allowing the country to avoid sanctions and be paid in Venezuelan gold in exchange for sham “humanitarian” deliveries of fuel to Venezuela;

Whereas, on January 15, 2024, Maduro proved to the world that he operates a criminal enterprise disguised as a country when he named Alex Saab as the head of Venezuela’s International Investment Center; and

Whereas the illegitimate Maduro regime has exhibited a clear pattern of corruption, ruling by force, and undermining stability and democracy in Venezuela: Now, therefore be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) rejects the attempt by the illegitimate
3 Maduro regime to hold sham elections and consoli-
4 date power through weaponizing institutions, espe-
5 cially the electoral committee and judicial system;

6 (2) demands that the Bolivarian Republic of
7 Venezuela hold free and fair elections on July 28,

1 2024, and allow all opposition candidates, including
2 Edmundo González Urrutia, to register on the ballot
3 and participate in the elections in compliance with
4 the Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political
5 Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All (commonly
6 known as the “Barbados Agreement”);

7 (3) denounces any attempt by the illegitimate
8 Maduro regime to intimidate and repress the Ven-
9 zuelan people and its democratic candidates
10 through any kind of violence;

11 (4) condemns the illegitimate Maduro regime
12 for the flagrant and repeated acts of corruption,
13 desecrating the rule of law, and engaging in anti-
14 democratic and criminal acts; and

15 (5) encourages the Administration to condemn
16 the results of the Venezuelan election on July 28,
17 2024, if fraud occurs, and to subsequently impose
18 additional sanctions on Maduro and the coconspira-
19 tors in his illegitimate regime to ensure they are un-
20 able to profit through their illegal and corrupt activi-
21 ties.

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