

RESOLUTION ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN VENEZUELA

The defense of the fundamental freedoms, of human rights and of the sacred values of democracy constitute the core and *raison d'être* of IDC-CDI. In defense of these principles, which inspire our very existence, we consider:

1. That every day it is becoming more evident that the decision of the government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, under President Nicolas Maduro, to silence the growing clamor of the Venezuelan people for drastic and profound change in the leadership of the state, made abundantly plain by the great victory of the democratic opposition in the elections held last year members of the National Assembly.
2. That no true democracy can accept the fact that in Venezuela there are political prisoners and that both the rule of law and the most fundamental rights of the citizens are openly trampled upon with impunity. The whole world knows that Mr. Leopoldo Lopez, one of the most distinguished and important leaders of the opposition has been sentenced to a long prison term for non-existent misdeeds and by means of a disgraceful trial which violates the most fundamental principles of the latter, including even the right to defend oneself. The same fate has been befalling other recognized leaders of the opposition, such as the mayor of Caracas Antonio Ledezma, Daniel Ceballos, Manuel Rosales and another seven or eight political and student leaders, jailed because of their struggle for freedom and democracy.
3. That the despotic and autocratic actions of the Venezuelan government have gone so far as to eliminate the independence of the judicial organs of the state, which are now at the service of the political interests of the regime. The sentence by which the Supreme Tribunal of the country has declared unconstitutional the "Law of Amnesty and Reconciliation" is an affront to democracy and an unacceptable outrage against the universal principles upon which the rule of law is based.
4. That the current Venezuelan government has turned the freedom of expression into a painful joke. The independent media have become victims of every type of outrage and have been forced to suspend or even definitively end their duty to inform, and some of the most respected journalists of Venezuela have been forced to choose the cruel road of exile in order to save their lives and that of their families.
5. That the economic and social situation of Venezuela is a powder-keg nearing the point of explosion: according to international organizations, inflation will reach 1,600 per cent this year. The shelves of the supermarkets are empty, while anxious citizens have to cue for hours every day in order to acquire some food which will allow them to still the hunger of their children. Pharmacies lack medications, including the most common and urgent ones, and there are frequent denunciations about persons who die because the system is incapable of providing the most fundamental hospital care.

Finally, that Venezuela, which should be one of the richest countries in America, lacks about everything, including the right to dissent.

On the basis of the above-considerations, the IDC-CDI:

DECLARES:

1. That it firmly condemns the systematic violation of human rights and assaults against the fundamental freedoms of the Venezuelan people perpetrated by the government of Nicolas Maduro.
2. That it calls on the government of Nicolas Maduro to respect the norms of international humanitarian law, the principles expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all other instruments of respect for the human being agreed between nations.
3. That it demands from the Venezuelan government to respect and implement the “Law of Amnesty and National Reconciliation”, validly adopted by the National Assembly and, in consequence, to immediately restore the freedom of Ms. Leopoldo Lopez, mayor Antonio Ledezma, Daniel Ceballos, Manuel Rosales and other political prisoners held in the country.
4. That it states its total solidarity with the political prisoners of Venezuela, with the democratic opposition of this country represented by the Democratic Unity Roundtable (Mesa de Unidad Democratica – MUD), with the journalists who despite persecution by the regime struggle to retain their right of expression, with the exiles of the regime and with the anxieties suffered by our admired Venezuelan people.

Lisbon, 15/04/2016