

Forum: Security Council
Issue: The Situation in Venezuela
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Introduction

Over the past few years, Venezuela has been subject to one of the worst humanitarian and economic crises the world has ever seen. To some, it started with Hugo Chávez's election in 1999, to others, Nicolás Maduro's in 2013. Regardless of who is to be held responsible, Venezuela has gone from being one of the wealthiest nations in the world, to one in which people cannot afford the basic necessities for life. The reason why Venezuela is in such a state is not solely due to one main cause, but rather it is a culmination of issues ranging from dropping oil prices to economic mismanagement that has sent the country in a downwards spiral.

In the 1910s, the extraction of oil began in Venezuela which led to huge economic profits for the country. Although this was an ideal situation during times when oil prices were high such as in the 1960s and 70s, the opposite can be said for when oil prices were low. This is precisely what happened in 2014. Maduro's predecessor, Hugo Chávez, was largely popular with the people due to his social programs that aimed to help the poor throughout Venezuela. Although these programs were very beneficial, they were funded unsustainably which led to a growing amount of international debt and the depletion of government savings. After Chávez passed in 2013, Maduro was left to deal with the debt, economic mismanagement, and dropping oil prices to which he responded to by printing Venezuelan Bolívar. This severely depreciated the value of the Venezuelan Bolívar which caused [hyperinflation](#), essentially rendering people's savings useless. Since 2016, the [hyperinflation](#) rate in Venezuela has increased by 53,798,500%.

Alongside the issue of growing [hyperinflation](#), Venezuela is riddled with [corruption](#) beginning with its current president, Nicolás Maduro. [Corruption](#) within the nation has been largely responsible for the mass protesting and riots orchestrated by Venezuelan citizens. It has also sparked issues like the creation of the [National Constituent Assembly](#) and the Presidential Crisis of 2018 which have only added to social disruption.

In recent years, the United Nations has taken a step back on the Venezuelan crisis and believe that it must be solved within the nation before any further support can be given. However, they have provided aid to Venezuela on multiple occasions alongside other member states which have somewhat helped relieve the humanitarian aspect of the crisis.

All in all, the crisis in Venezuela is very complicated and intricate one. In order to effectively solve it, multiple aspects of the nation's financial, political and social sectors must be targeted in a manner that doesn't infringe upon national sovereignty and that above all, is legal. It also imperative that the nations citizens are kept in mind as many militaristic or forceful approaches may lead to loss of life, a less than ideal situation. The extent and severity of this humanitarian and economic crisis have been brought to such levels that it must not be allowed to continue.

Definition of Key Terms

Hyperinflation

Refers to the excessive, extremely fast, and out of control increase in general prices within an economy. Hyperinflation differs from regular inflation in the sense that hyperinflation requires a price increase of 50% or more per month.

The Gold Standard

A monetary system in which a country's currency has a value directly linked to gold. Countries that use the gold standard convert paper money into a fixed amount of gold.

Corruption

A form of dishonest conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery, done to acquire personal benefit/gain.

The National Assembly

An assembly composed of the representatives of a nation typically responsible for legislative, electoral and supervisory acts. In Venezuela, the National Assembly is comprised of 167 members split into 6 main parties which are then further split into 27 subgroups. Prior to the creation of the National Constituent Assembly in 2017, the National Assembly Served as the legislative body of Venezuela.

Democratic Unity Round Table (UNIDAD - MUD)

A coalition of Venezuelan political parties formed in 2008 to unify the opposition to President Hugo Chávez's United Socialist Party of Venezuela in the 2010 parliamentary elections. MUD currently hold 64 seats in the National Assembly and consist of mainly anti government politicians that oppose legislative initiatives by the President that could potentially harm the nation. In 2017, the National Assembly was stripped of its powers meaning MUD no longer had a say in legislative affairs leaving no legitimate opposition to the government.

The National Constituent Assembly of Venezuela

A constituent assembly elected in 2017 to draft a new constitution for Venezuela. Its members were elected in a special 2017 election that was deemed illegitimate and condemned by over 40 Latin and Western States. There are a total of 545 seats in the Constituent Assembly, 42 of which are vacant and 503 of which are occupied by the Great Patriotic Pole; a pro government political group. The National Constituent Assembly's mandate is set to expire at the end of 2020 which could potentially lead to the rise of the National Assembly once again.

Coup d'état

The removal of an existing government through non-legal, often violent and forceful means.

Fiscal Deficit

A period in which government spending is greater than government income leading to a gradual decline in a nation's economic savings.

Key Issues

Hyperinflation

[Hyperinflation](#) inflation is one of the primary causes of the Venezuelan crisis and is still very prevalent in the nation to this day. In 2018, the inflation rate was the highest it has ever been at 1,700,000%; in total, since the year 2016, the inflation rate has increased by 53,798,500%. Eventually, people couldn't afford basic necessities which caused problems such as poverty, starvation, and homelessness alongside a plethora of others. The cause of [hyperinflation](#) in Venezuela was the result of a variety of different factors that all accumulated and led to the current crisis.

Fiscal Deficit and Foreign Debt

The first major cause of the [hyperinflation](#) in Venezuela was the left over foreign debt caused as a result of Hugo Chávez's social programs. The programs put in place by Chávez were very effective at instigating social reforms during his presidency (1999-2013) with unemployment dropping from 14.5% to 7.8%, poverty dropping from 50% to 31.9% and extreme poverty dropping from 19.9% to 8.6% between the years 1999 and 2011. Although these programs were very beneficial for people, the funding methods were not sustainable which led to a large amount of foreign debt and [fiscal deficit](#). Chávez borrowed large amounts of money from other countries to keep the social programs running which reached a total value of a little over 106 billion USD in foreign debt by 2013. Chávez had

been warned about the growing [fiscal deficit](#) but refused to acknowledge it as the social programs were a way of maintaining his popularity amongst the people; the best method of ensuring he stayed in power. To make matters even worse, Chávez and his government failed to save any money for potential future economic crises, one of which would occur in 2014 after his passing.

Dropping Oil Prices

The second major cause of [hyperinflation](#) in the Venezuelan economy was the fall in oil prices during 2014. Hugo Chávez and his government failed to set aside any funding in the case of an economic crisis because of the intense focus on his social programs. A major flaw in the Venezuelan economy is that it is based on selling solely one commodity, oil. Ever since the discovery of oil in Venezuela in the early 1900's, the country has relied on it more and more every year for funding with oil exports making up over 50% of its GDP and 95% of their total exports. When oil prices spiked, especially during the 1960's and 1970's, it benefited the Venezuelan economy and the quality of life for citizens was excellent. However, it had the opposite effect when oil prices started to decline which is precisely what happened in the year 2014. In 2013, oil prices were approximately 100 USD per barrel which dropped to 70 USD in 2014 and even more in 2016 when the price per barrel was 33 USD. Due to the lack of economic savings caused by Chávez, the drop-in oil prices sent the Venezuelan economy into a downwards spiral and the government was unable to subsidize basic necessities for their citizens. Small businesses or industries that relied on government subsidies such as periodic economic injections or tax breaks had to either increase the cost of their product or shut their business down because it was no longer profitable. Both solutions have a negative impact on society because people can either no longer afford basic necessities or they simply weren't available. Due to this issue happening for a prolonged period, it helped fuel the fast approaching humanitarian crisis. A combination of all the

aforementioned elements led to the issue of [hyperinflation](#) in the Venezuelan economy causing massive outcries, protests and riots from citizens.

Humanitarian Aspect

As a result of the [hyperinflation](#) in the Venezuelan economy, a domino effect of humanitarian issues has begun ranging from police brutality to starvation. Since the year 2014, an estimated 3 million Venezuelans have fled their country in hopes to rebuild their lives elsewhere. The majority of Venezuelan refugees have fled to neighboring countries with the most popular being Colombia; but some have travelled as far as Spain and Italy.

Police Brutality

An ever persistent problem in the Venezuelan crisis is police brutality and the crackdowns on protest activity. The Venezuelan military remains loyal to Maduro and his beliefs which means levels of violence have increased throughout Venezuela. During the 2014 and 2017 protests, security forces and armed pro-government groups attacked demonstrations some of which contained more than 10,000 people. Protestors were shot at point blank range with riot control ammunition, beaten down with batons even in extreme cases, tortured with electric shocks and asphyxiation. More than 12,500 people connected with the protests have been arrested since 2014 and although there haven't been any massive demonstrations since August of 2017, security forces continue repressing spontaneous events.

The use of security forces to control protestors has been a common occurrence in many nations around the world; especially concerning events as large as the ones in Venezuela. However, the major issue in Venezuela is not the use of security forces but rather the methods of riot control that are being

implemented. Torture and asphyxiation violate multiple human rights including the right to life, the right to liberty and security, and the right to equal protection.

Shortage of Supplies

On a national scale, Venezuelans are facing other problems which are severely impacting their day to day lives such as shortages of medicine, medical supplies and food which is a direct violation of their human rights. A 2018 nationwide study by three Venezuelan universities found that 80% of Venezuelan households were food insecure and interviewees had lost an average of 11 kilograms in one year. The 2016 data from the Venezuelan ministry of health showed that maternal mortality rate increased to 65%, infant mortality rate increased to 30% and cases of malaria increased by 76%.

Unfortunately, international support for Venezuela has slowed in recent years and donations haven't been effective at targeting the shortage of supplies. The United Nations alongside other member states have attempted to deliver medical equipment to Venezuela which has helped to some degree, but only certain groups of people have had access to these supplies. The quantity of aid hasn't been sufficient either which has left many Venezuelans struggling to survive in the harsh conditions.

The Issue of Two Presidents

By far one of the most unorthodox issues in the Venezuelan crisis is the issue of two presidents. In 2013, Nicolás Maduro became the Venezuelan President replacing Hugo Chávez after his death. However, on January 23, 2019, the [National Assembly](#) declared Juan Guaidó as the acting President of Venezuela until proper democratic presidential elections took place. This was done due to the widely disputed 2018 Presidential Elections that saw Nicolás Maduro elected for another six year term. On top

of the key issues previously mentioned, Venezuela was also in the midst of a Presidential Crisis.

Divide of the People and Nations

The Venezuelan Presidential Crisis caused massive disputes not only between Venezuelan citizens, but nations as well. The public was largely divided between the two presidents with some being pro Maduro and others pro Guaidó causing protests and riots across the nation. According to the Venezuela's constitution, the President of the [National Assembly](#) is to be declared as acting President of Venezuela during times of presidential vacancy; in this case, caused by the widely disputed Presidential Election of 2018. Unaware of who was the legitimate president is, the public is divided according to their political views causing further chaos and disruption within the nation.

As of June 2019, Guaidó is recognized as the rightful and acting President of Venezuela by 54 nations; mostly consisting of South American and Western countries. However, Nicolás Maduro has declared that Guaidó's presidency is a staged [coup d'état](#) by the United States in order for the government to seize control of Venezuela. It is also worth mentioning that Venezuela's armed forces remain loyal to Nicolás Maduro; most likely due to the multitude of benefits they receive from doing so such as a drastically lower exchange rate.

Corruption in Venezuela

The initial spark of the Venezuelan protests is considered by many to be the high levels of [corruption](#) within Maduro's government. Maduro's intentions as president became clear in 2015 at which point a party known as the [Democratic Unity Round Table \(UNIDAD - MUD\)](#) won two thirds majority of the [National Assembly](#), putting Maduro's presidency at risk. In response, Maduro forced out several members of the supreme court and replaced them

with representatives loyal to him, one example of [corruption](#) in Venezuela. In 2016, the supreme court stripped the [National Assembly](#) of its power which sparked massive protests within Venezuela, leaving hundreds dead and thousands injured. Even though the ruling was reversed only a few days later, the damage had already been done and the citizens of Venezuela continued to protest in the streets.

In July of 2017, despite public outcry, Maduro ran elections for a new governing body known as the [National Constituent Assembly](#) which would have the power to rewrite Venezuela's constitution. The public didn't have a say in whether the [National Constituent Assembly](#) would exist, and only had the ability to vote for its members. The opposition boycotted the vote, but Maduro held it anyway and won by a majority which severely escalated the protests within Venezuela. With the [National Constituent Assembly](#) now in power, it left virtually no opposition to Maduro's government.

Foreign Involvement

One of the major issues contributing to the Venezuelan crisis is the foreign involvement of multiple nations including the United States, Russia and China alongside many Western and South American states. The most notable of these is the United States due to the multitude of actions they have taken on the matter including placing sanctions on various aspects of the Venezuelan government, severing diplomatic ties with the nation and supporting interim president Juan Guaidó. The drastic involvement of the United States has led to the questioning of their intentions particularly by Nicolás Maduro who accused the nation of staging a coup d'état in attempts to seize Venezuela. The reason why foreign involvement has become an issue for Venezuela, particularly regarding the sanctions set by the US, is due to the negative effects on citizens. A major aspect of the sanctions focuses on restricting trade which has been detrimental to the Venezuelan economy as most of their income is generated from oil exports. During times of low economic activity, it is very likely that citizens will suffer as access to basic

necessities will decrease and financial support/benefits will be much harder to come across.

Another instance of foreign involvement by the United States is the situation of Luke Denman, a US soldier attempting to seize control over Caracas' airport alongside 12 other US citizens. The aim of the operation was to extract Maduro from Venezuela via plane and transfer him to the United States. Denman claimed that a firm known as Silvercorp USA signed a contract with Juan Guaido to orchestrate the event but a Guaido advisor claimed that it was only an 'exploratory agreement'. President Donald Trump denied any involvement and called Maduro's accusations 'not credible', stating that the United States intended to remain focused on “achieving a peaceful, democratic transition in Venezuela.”. Denman was questioned in an interview that was broadcasted on Venezuelan State TV in which he revealed the information pertaining to Silvercorp USA. After the broadcast, the US State Department spokesman declared that there would be no further comments on the matter "due to privacy considerations". The legitimacy of this operation is still being questioned and investigated in order to deduce the United States' involvement.

Major Parties Involved

The National Assembly of Venezuela

With the [National Constituent Assembly](#) in power since 2017, the [National Assembly](#) founded in 2000 under Hugo Chávez's presidency has been sidelined when it comes to major political decisions in Venezuela. However, this hasn't stopped the [National Assembly](#) from having massive influence over Venezuelan citizens as the only legitimate opposition to Maduro's government. As mentioned previously, the [National Assembly](#) of Venezuela has had a major part to play when it comes to the Venezuelan Presidential Crisis. In 2019, the president of the [National Assembly](#), Juan Guaidó was declared the acting president of Venezuela and swore himself in on the 23rd of January 2019. According to Venezuela's constitution, during times of presidential vacancy, the

position of acting president of Venezuela is given to the current president of the [National Assembly](#). This act has caused both national and international unrest splitting the views of both citizens and nations across the globe. The Venezuelan public are divided with one side being in support of the [National Assembly](#) and the other supporting Maduro's government. 54 nations worldwide have recognized Guaidó as the legitimate and acting president of Venezuela consisting of mainly South American and Western countries. Despite the [National Assembly](#) losing its political power to the [National Constituent Assembly](#) in 2017, they have still remained one of the most influential parties in the nation. With the [National Constituent Assembly](#)'s mandate set to expire at the end of 2020, the [National Assembly](#) might seize the opportunity to rise once again once again.

In more recent news, the 2020 [National Assembly](#) Delegated Committee election saw the creation of even more disruption in Venezuelan politics. On the morning of the election, Luis Parra declared his candidacy for President of the [National Assembly](#) in opposition to Guaidó. Previously being barred from Venezuelan legislative chambers, Parra was granted access to building while police officers stood outside blocking the opposition from entering. Parra was granted presidency in a hasty vote joined by multiple [National Assembly](#) deputies loyal to Maduro. Meanwhile, outside the parliament, a separate session was held which saw 100 out of 167 deputies re-elect Guaidó as the president of the [National Assembly](#). This event caused further confusion and dispute about who the legitimate president of the [National Assembly](#) was, adding to the political unrest the nation was already facing.

The United States of America

The United States of America is one of three P5 Nations that recognize Juan Guaidó as the rightful Interim President of Venezuela. Prior to Guaidó's declaration of Presidency, the United States of America and Venezuela's relations were poor due to the two conflicting ideologies between the nations. The United States of America have declared that they are working closely with Interim President Juan Guaidó and his team in areas of mutual concern such as humanitarian and migration issues, security and anti

narco trafficking initiatives, and reestablishment of the law. On the 9th of March 2015, President Barack Obama signed and issued a presidential order declaring Venezuela a threat to US national security and issued sanctions against seven individuals, one of which was President Nicolás Maduro. The severity of these sanctions has since been increased and extended to over 100 individuals under Donald Trump's presidency. The United States appears to be answering the calls of Interim President Juan Guaidó to help Venezuelan people cope with severe food, water, medical and energy shortages. In total, the United States has provided over 856 million USD to support Venezuelan's in response to the regional crisis. As of recently, the United States has suspended all diplomatic relations with Venezuela which has severely impacted their economy as one of their largest trading partners. However, despite the claims and actions of the US, their intentions are still questioned by many Venezuelans including Nicolás Maduro.

China

Contrary to the United States of America, China is one of two P5 nations together with Russia that backs Maduro's government. A large reason as to why Juan Guaidó still hasn't taken away power from Nicolás Maduro is due to China's strong financial and military ties to Venezuela. China has refused to recognize Guaidó's presidency as they believe that doing so would amount to intervening in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. Pro Guaidó member states, including the United States Chief have interpreted China's stance as pro Maduro and have even gone as far as saying that the Chinese government is largely responsible for the current Venezuelan crisis. However, Guaidó has recently started a campaign to try and convince Beijing to end its support for Maduro's government arguing that his party would protect Chinese interests in Venezuela. The two nations hold indispensable value to one another with Beijing playing a very important economic and political partner to Caracas. China also views Venezuela as a very significant trading partner especially in the crude oil sector and considers the nation an important component in their future economic prosperity and energy security. From the years 2008 to 2018, direct Chinese investment to the country reached 6 billion USD while total loans to Venezuela exceeded the 60 billion USD mark.

It is in China's best interest to maintain positive relations with Venezuela but the conflicting presidency in the nation is making it increasingly difficult. Currently, the majority of direct Chinese investment in Venezuela has either been stopped or put on hold due to the unpredictable conditions for business in the nation.

Russia

Much like China, Russia have played an instrumental role in preserving Maduro's regime in the forms of diplomatic leverage, security personnel, material as well as economic support. This has been largely possible due to a Russian company called Rosneft which bought, transported and sold Venezuelan crude oil. The involvement of Rosneft in Venezuelan crude has played an integral part in allowing Maduro's government and the state owned oil company Petróleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA) to profit and avoid US sanctions. Rosneft managed to have an influence in Venezuela for over two years before severing its ties with the nation due to two new successive rounds of US sanctions which significantly reduced profits. Essentially, Russia has played a key role in helping Venezuela avoid the multitude of sanctions set by the United States of America which created a very strong alliance between the two nations. Nicolás Maduro has publicly praised Vladimir Putin and Russia's government for their support in Venezuela even after Rosneft severed its ties with the nation. Despite heavy opposition from the likes of the United States of America, Russia shows continued support for Maduro's government alongside China and other nations.

United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) have issued multiple statements regarding the Venezuelan crisis and have been tackling youth malnutrition, youth healthcare and the lack of education within the country. To combat the issue of a shortage of medical equipment, in 2019, the UN agency ramped up their aid delivering 55 tons of health supplies to 25 hospitals across Caracas, Miranda, Zulia, Bolivar and Táchira. These supplies included midwifery kits, antibiotics and malaria treatment.

Another instance of UN aid in Venezuela is the response plan that was launched in August of 2019 which aimed to accomplish three main objectives: “improve access to basic goods and services, strengthen community and institutional mechanisms to protect and promote people’s dignity and build resilience, support livelihoods and contribute to the sustainability of basic service provision.”. Although the United Nations have had some influence in Venezuela, they have recently taken a step back and stated that the issue must be solved within the nation before it can be aided internationally.

Development of Issue/Timeline

Date	Event	Outcome
1910s	Oil drilling commences in Venezuela.	The start of oil drilling in Venezuela saw the country become one of the wealthiest in the world with very high standards of living.
February 2nd, 1999	Hugo Chávez begins his first presidential term.	According to a variety of critics, Hugo Chávez’s election was the beginning of the current Venezuelan crisis. His election marked the start of social reforms in Venezuela.
February 2nd, 1999 – March 5th, 2013	Hugo Chávez implements social programs throughout Venezuela using government funding as well as international loans.	Throughout Chávez’s presidency, he established a multitude of social programs that aimed to support the poor people of Venezuela. Although these programs were very effective, meeting nearly all of Chávez’s expectations, they were funded unsustainably. However, he was

		largely popular amongst the people which ensured his position of power.
March 5th, 2013	Hugo Chavez dies of cancer in Caracas, Venezuela	Chávez's death marked the end of an era in Venezuela with the social programs slowly being halted across the country.
April 19th, 2013	Nicolás Maduro's presidential term begins.	Following Hugo Chávez's death, the Vice President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro was elected as his successor.
2013-2014	Oil prices begin to drop drastically.	Venezuela's reliance on crude oil as an economic source backfired when oil prices dropped during 2013 and 2014. With no government savings and more than 106 billion USD worth of debt, Venezuela was at the beginning of an economic crisis.
February 4th, 2014	Protests begin against policies implemented by Nicolás Maduro in response to economic recession.	The Venezuelan public began to protest about the recession and inflation rate in Venezuela which led to further social disruption within the nation.
December 6th, 2015	The Democratic Unity Round Table (UNIDAD -MUD) win 2/3 majority in the National Assembly Parliamentary elections.	MUD was the only legitimate opposition party to Maduro's government in Venezuela at the time. Because they held 2/3 majority of the seats in the national assembly , Maduro's rule was put at great risk. To ensure

		<p>Maduro stayed in power, he removed many members of the supreme court and replaced them with people loyal to him. This is one of the first major examples of corruption in the Venezuelan legal system.</p>
<p>March 29th, 2017</p>	<p>The National Assembly of Venezuela is stripped of its power by the Supreme Court.</p>	<p>The supreme court, filled with members loyal to Maduro, stripped the national assembly of all its power meaning there was no legitimate opposition. This sparked major protests across the nation which led to the ruling being reversed only a few days later. Regardless, the damage had already been done and the protests continued.</p>
<p>May 1st, 2017</p>	<p>Maduro orders an election of a new legislative council known as the National Constituent Assembly.</p>	<p>Without any form of referendum, Maduro order an election of a new National Assembly which would have the power to re-write Venezuela's constitution. The new assembly would be known as the National Constituent Assembly. People didn't have a say in whether the assembly existed, they could only vote for its members which consisted of Maduro's supporters.</p>

<p>July 30th, 2017</p>	<p>The National Constituent Assembly is officially elected.</p>	<p>In what was named one of the most disputed and fraudulent elections of all time, the members of the National Constituent Assembly were elected. Venezuelan's were in uproar and took to the streets in massive demonstrations and protests. At this point in time, there was virtually no opposition to Maduro's government. The election was condemned by many nations including the United States which imposed sanctions on Venezuela.</p>
<p>2018</p>	<p>The value of the Venezuelan Bolivar plummets.</p>	<p>During 2018, the value of the Venezuelan bolivar plummeted as Maduro continued to print more money without the backing of sufficient gold. This rendered the savings of many Venezuelan's worthless and hyperinflation was taking action in full force.</p>
<p>May 20th, 2018</p>	<p>Maduro is re-elected for a second term "illegitimately" which brings rise to the National Assembly and Juan Guaidó.</p>	<p>After another round of illegitimate presidential elections which saw Maduro re-elected for a second presidential term, the President of the National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, spoke out against Maduro and declared he was the rightful interim president.</p>

		<p>Although the National Assembly was powerless, it was still the only recognized opposition to Maduro and had massive influence in Venezuela. According to Venezuela's constitution, the President of the National Assembly is to assume interim presidency during times of presidential vacancy. This raised the issue of two presidents.</p>
January 23rd, 2019	<p>Juan Guaidó swears himself in as the President of Venezuela.</p>	<p>As of the 23rd of January 2019, Juan Guaidó swore himself in as the acting interim President of Venezuela. Over 50 countries recognize Guaidó as the official president whilst 20 recognize Maduro.</p>
January 5th, 2020	<p>2020 Venezuelan National Assembly Delegated Committee election. Venezuelan Parliamentary Crisis</p>	<p>During the 2020 National Assembly election, Luis Parra announced his candidacy for President of the National Assembly on the morning of the election. Previously being barred from the legislative chambers, Parra was allowed in for this occasion alongside other pro Maduro deputies and was elected as the new President of the National Assembly in a set of hasty elections. The opposition was prevented from entering the</p>

		<p>legislative palace by police and held a separate session outside the chambers which saw the re-election of Juan Guaidó as president. The Venezuelan Parliamentary Crisis caused further disruption and confusion in a nation already suffering a humanitarian and economic crisis. The position is currently disputed between Parra and Guaidó.</p>
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Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Attempts to Solve Government Debt

One of the main issues contributing to the Venezuelan crisis is the growing rate of [hyperinflation](#) which is rendering savings useless causing poverty and homelessness in the nation. Throughout history, inflation was usually caused due to the printing of money in an attempt to solve various government issues, one of which is international debt; this was exactly the case with Venezuela. Hugo Chávez was so invested in his social programs and ensuring he stayed in power that he forgot to consider the future of the nation and quickly depleted the government of all its savings. On top of this, he built up over 106 billion USD of international debt which needed to be paid back in the near future. After Chavez's death, Maduro was left to deal with the debt caused by his predecessor and thought the best way to do so was by printing Venezuelan Bolívar. This solution to solve government debt sent the nation into severe [hyperinflation](#), causing riots and social unrest in the streets. Although the solution might have generated government income for a short period of time, it was rapidly dropping the value of the Venezuelan Bolívar due to a concept in economics known as [The Gold](#)

[Standard'](#). Maduro's attempt to salvage the Venezuela's economy severely backfired and ended up causing an even larger issue on top of the already existing ones.

International Recognition

The recent Presidential Crisis in Venezuela has not only caused more political and social unrest within the nation, but has also impacted many countries across the globe. In response to the fraudulent and illegitimate Presidential Elections in Venezuela during 2018, Juan Guaidó, the president of the [National Assembly](#), swore himself in as acting President of Venezuela on the 23rd of January 2019. Many nations around the world responded to this by recognizing one rightful leader; either Nicolás Maduro or Juan Guaidó. Guaidó backers consisted primarily of South American and Western nations such as the United States, whereas Maduro supporters were countries that agreed with his ideologies and governing system like China and Russia. More than 50 nations recognized and supported Guaidó and approximately 20 favored Maduro; the rest remained neutral and didn't wish to intervene in the matter. International support for Guaidó was implemented as a strategy to draw him closer to the Presidential seat, but to this day, the title remains disputed between the two. Unfortunately, even with international support, Guaidó has still not become the rightful and only recognized President of Venezuela around the world which has massively slowed down support for the country. If Venezuela continues to remain split between the two leaders, international support will remain counterproductive and prolong the current crisis. External governments have been unable to assist the matter other than by recognizing the rightful leader because of the potential infringements on Venezuela's national sovereignty; the issue must be solved directly in Venezuela.

United States Sanctions

One of the more extreme approaches to the Venezuelan crisis was taken by the United States which issued sanctions on the nation beginning in 2015 under Barack Obama's presidency. The United States deemed Venezuela a threat to its national

security and issued sanctions on March 5th, 2015 which later expanded and escalated in 2018 under Donald Trump's presidency. The sanctions restrict several aspects of Venezuela's financial, political and trade sectors which have heavily impacted economic activity in the nation. According to the official documentation by the United States government, the sanctions include: terrorism sanctions, drug trafficking sanctions, anti democratic actions, human rights violations, [corruption](#), broader sectoral sanctions, financial sanctions, policy considerations and government transactions. According to many critics, including the UN Human Rights Chief, the sanctions would "intensify the struggle of millions." due to their broad and vague nature. Although the sanctions may be effective at freezing economic activity, they fail to take into account the implications on Venezuela's society which could potentially worsen the current humanitarian crisis.

Short Term Aid

According to the United Nations Human Rights Council, they have organized aid to Venezuela on a number of occasions to combat youth malnutrition and a lack of education. However, there are no reports as to whether that aid was actually implemented in Venezuela or if it was effective at mitigating the effects of the humanitarian crisis. The United Nations have taken a step back when it comes to the Venezuelan crisis, especially the United Nations Security Council, as they believe that the problem must be solved from within Venezuela. However, other nations such as the United States, Brazil, Colombia and the Netherlands have delivered short term aid to the nation to help with some of the shortages in the nation. Although this strategy might be effective for a brief period of time and a select group of people, it is not sustainable in the long run. That being said, it is imperative that for the time being, citizens are supplied with essentials in order to prevent mass loss of life in Venezuela.

Possible Solutions

Intensifying Economic and Diplomatic Pressure

Another possible solution to the Venezuelan crisis might include intensifying the already existing pressure on the government. The United States of America have already imposed multiple sanctions on Venezuela which could be developed even further to increase the pressure placed on Maduro. This should either drive the government into cracking and Maduro resigning willingly or should establish some form of cooperation between Venezuela and other nations in order to solve the crisis. However, this solution is very risky as it could worsen the current humanitarian crisis in the case one of the two situations mentioned above doesn't occur. To combat this, nations might want to consider increasing the supply of humanitarian aid to Venezuela during the period of increased government pressure.

Short Term Support/Aid for Citizens

Although short term aid is already being delivered to the nation, its effects are minimal due to the reduced quantity of supplies as well as the intended target group. The vast majority of Venezuelans aren't exposed to any sort of international aid from either the United Nations or other member states because there simply isn't enough to go around. As a short term solution, nations could consider increasing the supply of aid to Venezuela to reduce the effects of the current humanitarian crisis. For further encouragement, the United Nations could incentivize member nations to deliver aid to Venezuela in the form of financial benefits.

Forced Humanitarian Intervention

Throughout past humanitarian crises, it is not an uncommon occurrence for international aid to be intercepted by either militia groups within the nation or the government itself. In Venezuela, international aid may be cutoff by the government in which case the United Nations could implement forced humanitarian intervention. If the only way to deliver aid to the citizens and prevent loss of life is by forceful measures, then they must be implemented in order for the crisis not to escalate. However, this

option should be reserved for cases where normal humanitarian aid is not possible and forceful measures should always be a last case scenario.

Much like with the removal of Maduro from government, this solution could potentially infringe upon national sovereignty which will have to be dealt with in a diplomatic and legal manner.

Military Intervention

According to Juan Guaidó, a military intervention is the best, and perhaps the only way to truly bring an end to the Venezuelan crisis. He believes that it is the only way to force Maduro out of government is by using forceful measures and weakening his national support systems. Although it might be effective, further conflict could lead to increased geopolitical tension, especially due to the preexisting presence of US and Russian troops within Venezuela. Military intervention should be used as an absolute last resort in the case the situation cannot be dealt with in another manner as it poses a high risk of civilian casualties alongside a plethora of other issues. The legalities of such an intervention will also have to be thoroughly investigated before the solution can be implemented.

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Appendix

I. Overview of US Sanctions on Venezuela

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IF10715.pdf>

II. Venezuela's Constitution

https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Venezuela_2009.pdf?lang=en.%20Accessed%2029%20July%202020.