

## **After May 20th, Maduro remains a dictator**

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Maduro, with the electoral simulation on May 20, seeks to keep governing in Venezuela "until he drops". According to Colombian president, Juan Manuel Santos, the simulation on May 20 will be the last time Venezuelans vote to elect a president. Thus, Maduro tries to trick the majority of Venezuelans. His electoral campaign presents him as an inclusive person, with messages like "[I care about you](#)", and also showing everyone is the president of the country, wearing all the people in the promotional video the Venezuelan mayoral sash.

His poor government performance during five years, the worst crisis that Venezuela has had in its entire republican history, Maduro tries to erase with the message "strength, unity, and love". For which he wears light blue and white clothes, to reflect generosity, purity, and peace.

Nowadays, the electoral results are increasingly being influenced by the emotional vote than by the ideological or rational vote, being fear and enthusiasm basic emotions.

In a recent study done by Public Religion Research Institute and The Atlantic, shows that fears of cultural displacement pushed the white working class to Trump more than economic concerns.

During the electoral simulation of May 20, Maduro is seeking to maintain its political base by moving away from the past, from the Chavez brand. That is why he is abandoning the red color, to avoid being associated with the performance of the last 18 years, and he is adopting the new party Somos Venezuela (We Are Venezuela), breaking up with the Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (United Socialist Party of Venezuela, PSUV). The objective is to reposition the Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century project, expressed in the Plan de la Patria.

During the 2013 presidential elections, Maduro used Chavez as a means to capture the Chavista vote, "[Maduro from my heart](#)". This time, Maduro's differentiation strategy is that everyone (the people) is president, everyone is governing, and "the people lead with Maduro, that's for sure".

Maduro offers enthusiasm to Venezuelans, in a country that is falling apart under his government, which is rejected by the majority of Venezuelans. 76.4 percent of the population evaluates the government negatively, according to Datanalisis. Incidentally, this number has a positive correlation (0.88) with the percentage of votes obtained by the government candidate since 2000. Therefore, Maduro would get 4.8 million votes on May 20.

On the other hand, the opposition is calling to abstain from participating in the electoral simulation to show rejection and lack of legitimacy of the regime. The opposition is doing this to protest against what Maduro and the nomenclatura want to continue doing in Venezuela.

With Maduro:

- the elite, that has been looting Venezuela for the past 18 years, will continue to get rich illicitly;
- the absolute control of public institutions will continue, with the exception of the National Assembly;
- poverty will reach 9 out of 10 Venezuelans –the “official” minimum wage only can only buy 2 kilos of chicken;
- childhood and mother mortality, and murder will keep rising;
- food and medicine scarcity will continue;
- water and electricity will be severely rationed;
- prices of goods will rise 13,000 percent this year, according to the International Monetary Fund;
- dissenting will be considered treason;
- political parties not aligned with Maduro will be banned and their leaders imprisoned, exiled or disqualified;
- the Venezuelan exodus will continue, affecting countries across the region;
- the humanitarian aid will continue to be denied by the regime.

Lastly, the Lima Group (15 countries of Latin America), the European Union, the United States and Canada will not recognize the results of the electoral simulation, deemed fraudulent.

Maduro’s brand is the same as in 2013. His new electoral message is to deceive potential voters and those undecideds to participate, 45 percent of the electorate, according to Datanalisis. However, the reality is that with Maduro the people will end up giving up the little liberties and prosperity remaining, because in the end “you can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear”.

Paraphrasing, Maduro even with his new clothes remains a dictator.