

## **The conditions of the field have changed in Venezuela**

Antonio De La Cruz

*Executive Director*

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The narrative that “all options are on the table” to resolve the political crisis in Venezuela is changing to a new one, “the democratic exit”. All the alternatives proposed in the last weeks converge towards a negotiation between the usurper, Nicolás Maduro, and the interim president, Juan Guaidó.

After the last meeting between the parties in Oslo, Norway, a series of meetings have taken place among the countries that support Maduro and Guaidó, which point in the direction of “the democratic exit”.

The foreign ministers of Colombia and Russia met in Moscow last Monday. In the press conference, Carlos Holmes Trujillo said that Colombia, in the context of the Lima Group, supports the “itinerary” marked by Guaidó and the forces that work in favor of “change”. He also said, “Colombia supports only a political and diplomatic means for an exit of the political situation in Venezuela”. At the same time, Sergey Lavrov insisted on an “inclusive dialogue” between all the political formations in the Latin American country, while he recalled the Russian rejection of the use of force -an unusual position because Moscow recently used its air force in Syria to support the oppressor Bashar al-Assad and the armed forces in Crimea for the annexation to Russia Federation. Also, Lavrov was pleased that “both countries (Colombia and Russia) agreed on the refusal of a military solution to the Venezuelan crisis”.

Also, the United State Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Stef Bolk, discussed the case of Venezuela in the meeting they held in The Hague last Sunday. It must be remembered that Holland, Aruba, Curacao, and St. Maarten are countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Last Monday, at the headquarters of the United Nations, in New York, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Chile and Peru, members of the Lima Group, together with the high representative of the EU and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and Uruguay, members of [International Contact Group](#), held a meeting to address the situation in Venezuela. The meeting agreed to the decision of both groups to “increase contacts to contribute to a political, peaceful and democratic solution to the Venezuelan crisis”. They also “confirmed their commitment to (achieve) a peaceful transition (in Venezuela) aimed at free and fair elections”.

Therefore, the negotiation table in Norway becomes the mechanism to tie the peaceful transition in Venezuela through free and fair elections.

In the United States, other options have been considered, given the resistance of humanitarian intervention in Venezuela. The most forceful is to initiate an offensive of accusations against Nicolás Maduro and his inner circle for laundering of money resulting from illicit activities and corruption, drug trafficking and organized crime actions in the courts of the United States. Up

till now, the only high-ranking official that has been charged by American justice is Tareck El Aissami, in 2017.

"In Washington, it is speculated that there are already sealed accusations from members of Maduro's inner circle and that the Justice Department is waiting for the right moment to make it public. The time has come to instruct the new accusations against members of the Maduro regime".

Additionally, there are two historical examples in which the US Department of Justice focused its action on areas that were aligned with the priorities of US foreign policy. In 1988, USDJ accused the president Manuel Noriega of Panama and members of his inner circle for drug trafficking, when relations between Washington and Panama were severe. Moreover, recently, USDJ charged and is extraditing Huawei's finance director from Canada, because the Trump government considers Huawei's 5G technology and China a threat to American security.

On the other hand, the recent investigation of [Douglas Farah and Caitlyn Yates](#) show that the Maduro regime is a Joint Criminal Enterprise with 183 people, 205 shell companies in 26 countries. Among the leading countries included are Uruguay, Portugal, Spain, Russia, Panama, the United States, and Suriname.

The financial crime of money laundering involves power factors related to the highest levels of government of the countries in question. Besides, the magnitude of the hiding reaches more than 100,000 million dollars between 2007-2018. This amount represents a threat to the global financial system because of the systemic implications and institutions involved.

Resolving the political crisis in Venezuela through this approach could have a domino effect at the level of the political class and the financial system of the countries involved in money laundering and drug trafficking.

An example of the impact is the recent recognition by the Mexican government of [López Obrador](#) that cartels, including key border areas, run 80% of its populated territory. The largest supplier of the drug to the Mexican cartels is the Bolivarian Joint Criminal Enterprise.

Another case is that presented by the journalist and writer [Jaime Bayly](#) in his program this past Monday, when he accused former Dominican President Leonel Fernández, a candidate (again) to govern the Dominican Republic for a fourth presidential term, having received at least between 4 million and 5 million dollars from people associated to the Bolivarian Joint Criminal Enterprise in order to buy protection for its members, after the raid of the mansion of Samark López (figurehead of Tareck el Aissami) in Punta Cana by agents from the United States (DEA) and the Dominican Republic (Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Laundering Office) Terrorism, and DNCD) last May.

Therefore, countries such as Uruguay, Portugal, Spain, Mexico, Russia and the islands of the Caribbean want the negotiated solution of Norway to solve the political crisis in Venezuela. It

allows governments and corrupt Venezuelans to minimize the collateral damage of prosecutions to Maduro and his inner circle by the US justice system.

Which leads to rethinking the strategy by Guaidó, because the conditions of the field have changed. Guaidó's leadership, 57% acceptance according to the Datanalisis Scenarios of May 2019, allows him to recognize and communicate a new road map to exit Venezuela's crisis. Otherwise, those who support the Norwegian solution will continue to erode his political capital, as they did with the statement of the second meeting in Oslo.

Guaidó has to take charge of the Norwegian negotiation to create the conditions for an agreement that allows fair, free, and democratic elections. Otherwise, it would give way to a new period of the Maduro regime, because the international narrative has changed to the electoral exit. This solution should happen in the shortest possible time, six months. Keep delaying it will favor the Maduro's Joint Criminal Enterprise, his inner circle, and the corrupt Venezuelans.