

## **Organization of American States (OAS)**

Addressing the Ongoing Political Instability and Democratic Challenges in Venezuela

**Moderator:** Santiago Gil **Director:** Woojin Seo **Secretary:** Miranda Elizondo

### **Description of Committee:**

"The Organization of American States is the world's oldest regional organization" (OAS 2019) In 1948, the OAS founding charter was signed in Bogotá, Colombia. It took around 42 years for this committee to be approved and recognized as an official committee. "The Organization uses a four-pronged approach to effectively implement its essential purposes, based on its main pillars: democracy, human rights, security, and development." (OAS 2019) The OAS's main goals are the development of democracies, management of security and law enforcement operations, expansion of technical and financial support for development projects, and oversight of human rights through the Americas' legal system. The only country that is not a member of the OAS in the American continent is Cuba, which has officially identified itself as a Marxist-Leninist government and is incompatible with the principles and objectives of the inter-American system. The organization was established to attain among its member states as stipulated in Article 1 of the Charter "an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and their independence." (OAS 1967) Modern days, the Organization of American States contains all 35 independent states of America and constitutes the main political, juridical, and social governmental forum in the Hemisphere, In addition, OAS has permanent observer status to a total of 70 member states, including the EU.

### **Introduction to the topic:**

Political instability means that there is a high chance that the country's government will collapse because of conflict or competition between political parties (World Bank). It can happen to any country and is mainly caused by corruption, rapid change in regimes, or other political issues appearing over time. Political instability is very strongly connected to an unstable economy. Unstable kinds of governments often have a lack of transparency and dependability when it comes to their economies. This leads to fewer trades and more inflation, making the economy unstable too. Political instability can also cause political violence, including civil war, terrorism, massive violent protests, and more. Moving on, democratic challenges are when democracy isn't working as intended. This can mean voted governments not fulfilling their promises, a lack of political parties that represent the people, or even getting authoritarian governments.

### **Background information on the topic:**

Venezuela has always been historically riddled with political instability, though its current problems can be traced back to 1998. In 1998, Hugo Chavez came to power in Venezuela and took advantage of its massive oil reserves and the current market for crude oil, making a state-owned oil company. It used that wealth to provide subsidized goods and services. This change improved the economy and people's quality of life a lot, reducing extreme poverty by 15%. This new plan, however, was flimsy as it made Venezuela very dependent on oil exports. Unfortunately, the

company eventually became corrupt and dysfunctional thanks to his government's mismanagement and corruption of its own. This, combined with a global collapse in oil prices, heavily impacted the country's economy.

Right after this massive decline in 2013, Chavez died, and the vice president, Nicolás Maduro, took over. Maduro tried to solve this economic crisis by printing more money. Unfortunately, instead of helping, it actually caused hyperinflation up to ten million percent. In 2014, massive anti-government protests began, and in 2015, they voted in an opposition-controlled National Assembly, causing conflict between the legislative party and Maduro. The economy got so bad that Venezuela needed to begin using a de facto two-currency system. The majority of its money from then on was in US dollars. He was suspiciously re-elected in 2018, even though there were many attempts at boycotts and the majority of people not wanting him in power, so much so 14 other countries from a group called the LIMA group condemned him. This led to accusations that the election was faked. Two weeks later, the National Assembly confirmed it as faked, leading to Juan Guaidó, from the opposing party, temporarily coming into power until a fair election could be held. This new interim president was supported by the US, Canada, the EU, and OAS; however, several other countries, including China, Russia, Cuba, and Turkey, still supported Maduro.

This led to a political standoff. The USA started adding sanctions directed at Maduro's government, the majority of them being oil shipments, which most commonly were to Cuba. On the other hand, Russia was sending support to Maduro via troops and helped them evade sanctions, and China offered to provide support as well.

Amid all this chaos in 2019, thousands of people started fleeing the country every day. This caused things to get worse, and the country began experiencing blackouts affecting people in the millions. Maduro had been denying the existence of any crises and refused help until April of that very year. The government is still struggling to provide social services, and Venezuela is facing many food and medicine shortages. Around 7.7 million people have fled Venezuela as of 2023, leading to the world's largest international displacement crisis ever.

### **Current Situation of the topic:**

Currently, Venezuela is experiencing a major social and economic collapse: a severe humanitarian emergency. With people unable to find stable sources to live or adequate health care and nutrition. According to El País more than 25% of Venezuela's population has had to flee the country as a result of the collapse. Meanwhile a third of the population (9.3 million) suffer from unstable food sources, and therefore starvation. Currently Venezuela is lead by its president called Nicolás Maduro however some refer to him more as a dictator as he seized control via questionable means in 2013. Maduro continued this line to power, removing competitors to lower the chances of someone else being elected president. In 2019 Maduro once again assumed leadership in a ceremony, however many venezuelas and neighbouring countries (and majority of the EU) deemed

this ascension illegitimate. According to freedomhouse.org an organization dedicated to measuring the freedom of different countries every year state that Venezuela has rated as “Not Free” since 2017. As such currently and for the past couple of years Venezuela has been considered a high risk country and tourists are advised to postpone their visits.

### **International actions on the topic:**

The United States actively works to promote democracy across the world. This means defending human rights, promoting free and fair elections, and aiding recently formed democracies. Through the use of a variety of diplomatic initiatives, the State Department promotes the international knowledge of American principles and policies while simultaneously holding states responsible for human rights norms and agreements. The promotion of economic expansion and prosperity is a third tenet of American foreign policy. Increasing investments and exports, promoting free trade, and assisting American businesspeople are all goals of diplomats. Fourth, the progress of the globe depends on the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It implements programs to increase global competitiveness, reduce poverty, combat illness, and improve the quality of life for those living in developing countries. These programs create a safe international environment that promotes economic growth and favorable perceptions of the United States. With more than 200 nations worldwide, the United States has bilateral and multilateral partnerships, each of which is distinct. However, it is crucial to understand that these connections are interrelated, and American involvement with the rest of the world needs to take home ideals and reality into account.

Many economists, however, argue that the trade deficit is not in and of itself a problem for the US economy and believe it has been unfairly blamed. This is because higher consumer spending and imports may result in a larger trade deficit, and higher interest rates may encourage foreign investors to invest in the US economy.

### **Questions to consider:**

- - What is your country’s position in the OAS and on the topic?
- - What is the main issue?
- - What is democracy and how did it fail in Venezuela?
- - How does this issue affect your country?
- - How does this issue affect other countries?
- - What has OAS done for this issue?
- - How will the other delegations benefit from the solutions?
- - Has the government been involved in these issues?
- - Has your delegation worked with any organizations?
- - Where does your country stand with this problem?
- - What has your country done to help with this problem?
- - How will you solve Venezuela’s situation with its government?

- - How are you going to enhance the human rights of migrants?

### **Recommendation for creating a resolution:**

- - The United Nations can not create any laws, but enforce them and take suggestions
- - Money is not a problem in the UN
- - Solutions must be related to the topic
- - Solutions need to be realistic ones that could be implemented in real-life
- - Prevent the use of personal pronouns (I, me, us, we)
- - Preambulatory clauses introduce the problem, for example: alarmed by, affirming, recognizing, and approving
- - Operative clauses explain your solutions, for example: affirm, confirm, authorize, and consider · Do not forget to write “, and” after each every clause you create
- - When it’s the speaker's time to present the resolution paper, after every clause is mentioned, the clause must be followed by “comma and” so it’s understandable when a clause has ended
- - Resolution papers will have 2 speakers and 3 sponsors
- - Speakers will be responsible for presenting the solutions, as well as listening to comments and responding to any questions the committee may have
- - Sponsors will be chosen depending on who provided the most help and participated in the creation of the resolution

### **Research AID:**

*International Cooperation and Information Exchange*. United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/es/firearms-protocol/international-cooperation-and-informati-on-exchange.html>

Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). *The U.S. trade deficit: How much does it matter?* Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-trade-deficit-how-much-does-it-matter>

Gilmore, J. (2022, January 29). *Young Professionals in Foreign Policy*. Young Professionals in Foreign Policy. <https://www.yppf.org/get-back-to-class-how-promoting-international-exchange-can-restore-america-s-reputation-abroad/>

*International Exchange*. International Exchange - an overview | ScienceDirect Topics. (n.d.). <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/international-exchange>

Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). *The Organization of American States*. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/organization-american-states>

*About the OAS.* U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States. (2023, July 14).

<https://usoas.usmission.gov/our-relationship/about-oas/#:~:text=Members%3A%2035%E2%80%94Antigua%20and%20Barbuda,Kitts%20and%20Nevis%2C%20Saint%20Lucia%20C>

Oas :: What we do - organization of American states. (n.d.-c).

[https://www.oas.org/en/about/what\\_we\\_do.asp](https://www.oas.org/en/about/what_we_do.asp)

UN - What are human rights?

<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights#:~:text=Human%20rights%20are%20rights%20inherent,and%20education%2C%20and%20many%20more.>

Venezuela - Video News

<https://www.aljazeera.com/where/venezuela/>

USIP - Fact Sheet

<https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/02/current-situation-venezuela>

## Terms and Concepts

1. **Economy:** The system of producing, selling, and buying goods and services in a country or region.
2. **Security Alliances:** The U.S. has numerous security alliances, such as NATO, to ensure collective defense and security cooperation. These alliances are critical to maintaining global stability and security.
3. **International Exchanges:** Any payment made by one country to another and the market in which national currencies are bought and sold by those who require them for such payments
4. **Democracy:** A system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.
5. **Dictatorship:** A type of government where a small group of people or a singular person has absolute power.
6. **Authoritarian regime:** A type of government characterized by a strong central power with limited political freedom.
7. **LIMA:** LIMA is a multilateral body that fights for human rights. It was founded by 12 Latin American countries in Peru (specifically in Lima, hence the name). It consists of the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.
8. **Hyper Inflation:** Out of control price increases. Inflation at a rate of at least 50% per month.
9. **Intrim president:** A person who temporarily fills the role of president when the official president isn't able to
10. **Politcal Stand-Off:** When two governemtns are negotiating, bargaining and fighting with each other but are unable to come to an agreement and make no progress.

## References

AG Global Strategies. (2023). *Governmental instability*. AG Global Strategies. <https://www.ag-globalstrategies.com/governmental-instability>

CPA (2023) *Instability in venezuela | global conflict tracker*, Council on Foreign Relations. Available at: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/instability-venezuela#RecentDevelopments-2> (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

Freedom House. (2023). *Venezuela: Freedom in the World 2023 Country Report*. Freedom House. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/venezuela/freedom-world/2023#:~:text=Overview,full%20control%20of%20state%20institutions>

Froomkin, D., & Shapiro, I. (2023, July 12). *Challenges to democracy*. Encyclopædia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/challenges-to-democracy>

Hussian, Z. (2014, June 1). *Can political stability hurt economic growth?*. World Bank Blogs. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/can-political-stability-hurt-economic-growth#:~:text=The%20standard%20definition%20of%20political,instability%20tends%20to%20be%20persistent>

Morelio, A. (2023) *Venezuela en el país, El País*. Available at: <https://elpais.com/noticias/venezuela/> (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

U.S. Embassy (2019) *Nicolás Maduro: Corruption and chaos in Venezuela*. Available at: <https://cu.usembassy.gov/nicolas-maduro-corruption-and-chaos-in-venezuela/> (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

*Venezuelan humanitarian and refugee crisis - CDP* (2023) Center for Disaster Philanthropy. Available at: <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/venezuelan-refugee-crisis/> (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

Wikimedia Foundation. (2023, November 8). *Political violence*. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political\\_violence#Datasets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_violence#Datasets)