

**Forum:** Historical Security Council

**Issue:** The Issue of Venezuela - 2002

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**Position:** President



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## Section One: Introduction Of The Issue

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### Introduction

11th of April 2002, the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, was driven out of office by the Venezuelan military and opposition groups by a coup d'etat. In many of his speeches, he openly states his strong desire to help the poor as he was an extreme leftist population, gaining inspiration from leftist revolutionary leaders such as Simon Bolivar and Fidel Castro in his speeches. However, in order to accomplish his goal, he quickly realised that he had to seize control of the country's most prized and valuable asset - oil. This is because oil was the main pillar that held Venezuela's economy intact and alive, as the oil companies can usually export an average of \$73 trillion US dollars worth of oil per day; however, only a certain portion of Venezuela's population benefited from the success of the oil industry and the poor barely received any social welfare programs and assistance from any organisation. Thus in December 2002, President Chavez fired the board of directors and eighteen thousand employees of the state-owned Oil company PDVSA (Petroleum of Venezuela), ultimately seizing control over PDVSA in order for his efforts for social reform that needed funding would not face monetary challenges due to PDVSA's profit seized by Chavez.

Since Chavez took control of the largest oil company in Venezuela, the exportation of oil barrels has halted. This resulted in a significant decline in the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) this year (2002). Many citizens in the upper and middle class were deeply angered by the actions of Chavez, as many relied on the oil companies for income and employment. Thousands of Venezuelans marched on the streets of Caracas in protest of the president's policies and actions, a majority of the protests were directed towards the Presidential Palace which was Chavez's accommodation before the coup. On the other hand, Chavez's supporters stationed themselves by the Presidential palace and often both pro and

anti-Chavez marchers would rally and argue against each other. Resultantly, several marchers died and were injured due to the political unrest. Chavez wanted to permanently end the chaos happening in Caracas and throughout Venezuela, he ordered the military to send in tanks to intimidate and halt the unrest in the streets. However, the Minister of Defence at the time refused as the military viewed the issue as a political issue. Thus did not want to engage in the conflict due to their experience in the Caracazo unrest in 1989. This was allegedly the beginning of the coup d'etat conspiracy. Chavez was forced out by this coalition of opposition groups which consisted of the board of directors and executives of PDVSA, prominent business figures and entrepreneurs, the catholic church (the Cardinal of Caracas), and the president of the Fedecamaras which is the Federation of Chambers of Commerce.

Following the imprisonment of Chavez, Pedro Carmona (president of the Fedecamaras), swears himself as the new president of Venezuela as a dictator. The new government eradicated every mechanism and framework that institutionalised democracy including the new constitution fabricated in 1999. After being detained in La Orchila (the offshore military base) for less than 48 hours, Chavez was transported back to his office in the Presidential Palace to become the president again while the military removed Carmona from office. Chavez is now back in power. With the elected government and president now restored, the international community must work hard to ensure the safety of democracy and must address the new humanitarian crisis erupting in the country.

## Definition of Key Terms:

### **Military Junta**

A Military junta is a government that is led by military leaders and often is used to describe new governments that were established after a coup d'etat. In this issue, the Venezuelan government is a Military Junta as Hugo Chavez was an influential military figure and had a large backing in the army through his leftist Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200.

### **Coup D'etat**

A coup d'etat is a situation where the army of a country rebels against its respective government and illicitly takes control and governs the country. An example would be how the military initially opposed President Chavez by driving him out of the office and detaining him.

### **Gross Domestic Product**

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the value of the total output of goods and services in the economy of a country. It is commonly used to measure the size of economies.

## Leftist

A leftist is an individual with political views that lean towards ideologies such as socialism, communism and Marxism. Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro and Joseph Stalin are all leftist politicians.

## Caracazo / Caracas Smash

Caracazo happened in February 1989, when the army was sent by President Perez with their tanks and weapons to the streets full of riots in Caracas and use violence to fully suppress riots about the spike in gas prices due to the recently implemented free-market reform by the government. As a result, government authorities reported that thousands were injured and 275 persons were killed by the army. However, according to the media, approximately 3,000 people were allegedly killed.

## Background Information

As of now, the Venezuelan people face a political, economic and social dilemma. Furthermore, due to the seizure of the largest oil company in Venezuela, PDVSA, Venezuela's GDP has significantly decreased as a result of halting oil exports. If the GDP continues to slope downwards, Venezuela could experience an economic recession and thus, businesses will struggle and unemployment will rise, leading to a rise in poverty. In terms of the destitute who were promised social welfare by Chavez, minimal assistance has been provided due to the political turmoil happening with the failed coup d'etat.

## Political Turmoil

Although the coup d'etat had failed, democracy is still at risk of collapsing. Another coup d'etat is still highly possible to occur towards Chavez as proven when Chavez himself attempted two coups before his presidential term to overthrow President Carlos Andres Perez during February 1992 and November 1992. Arguably, the opposition groups who tried to defeat Chavez could be considered more powerful and influential than Chavez's leftist Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200 which he used to attempt his coups. This is because the opposition groups consisted of not only the military but also rightist politicians, journalists, businessmen etc. Moreover, out of all of the alleged conspirators of the coup d'etat, only one was prosecuted - Pedro Carmona. This means that the plotters of the coup are still active and influential within Venezuela, suggesting that another coup in the near future could still be possible. Once a coup occurs, democracy can also be in danger depending on the transitional president and government. In the case of the new transitional president, Pedro Carmona, during the detainment of Chavez, he completely undermined democracy by diminishing the new constitution of 1999.

The opposition groups continue to deny that the series of events that occurred on April 11th to 12th was a coup d'état and refuse to admit that the coup committed multiple human rights violations through the killing of demonstrators (Article 3 and Article 6 of the Declaration of Human Rights), preventing and slowing the spread of information from the media (Article 19) etc. Moreover, the leaders of the opposition groups have been insisting that Chavez should resign from his duty as president before his term ends. In conclusion, both sides of the Chavez administration and the opposition leader have not agreed upon anything yet as each of them possesses polarising views. Chavez wishes to tax the rich and use the profits of PDVSA to end poverty in Venezuela using projects and programs that would require large funding. While the opposition leaders would like to keep the economic stability of Venezuela's economy by maintaining the productivity of its rich oil industry.

In addition, many active-duty members of the Venezuelan army continue to exercise political roles within the government. There are no measures in the law that prevent military figures from coming into politics. This could lead to the possibility of a police state that has the military in charge to govern the country. Usually, in these government systems, black markets will spike due to extreme restrictions and regulation in businesses and entrepreneurship and individual rights are reduced.

### **The Venezuelan Economy**

The main feature of the economy of Venezuela is its oil industry, the largest oil company being PDVSA which is a state-owned enterprise. In 2000, Chavez started to strengthen the relationship of Venezuela with Cuba by becoming friends with Fidel Castro, the leader of Cuba. During one of their ordeals in 2000, Chavez had agreed to provide Cuba with 53,000 barrels of oil per day at a lowered price to solidify the partnership of Cuba and Venezuela. After that, global oil prices faced a salient decrease. Thus, Chavez expanded the reach of Venezuela's oil exports to Caribbean nations during a program which he created to gain influence and allies in that area called - Petrocaribe.

During this year, Pedro Carmona, who was the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Venezuela and president of the most prominent coalition of labour unions, had helped command and directed a five-day general strike in April to show the support of PDVSA for being targeted by the president to fund his endeavours to end poverty in Venezuela. This strike was so significant that it halted the exporting of oil in Venezuela. With Venezuela being the fifth-largest oil exporter, other nations such as India are struggling in terms of their oil supplies. On the 11th of April 2002, a march became violent after it changed the direction of its course towards the Presidential Palace, only to meet Chavez supporters who defended the seizure of the oil industry in Venezuela. This altercation led to the death of 19 civilians. Responding to the general strike, Hugo Chavez fired the entire board of directors of PDVSA and 18,000 to 19,000 of its employees. This obviously led to an increase in unemployment and financial struggle for many citizens, which only increased the magnitude of demonstrations. As a replacement,

Chavez replaced the terminated employees with new workers and executives who he believed would be loyal to the government and would benefit from his endeavours to fight poverty in Venezuela.

## Enabling Act

Granted by the majority leftist National Assembly, the Enabling Law gave the president the power to rule by decree for a certain period of time before its expiration. Chavez intended to use the Act as a tool to quickly help the economy.

On 13 November 2001, Chavez used the Enabling Act one day before its expiration date to pass a total of 49 laws that was the turning point of public opinion regarding Chavez. Through these newly passed laws, Chavez: altered significant laws in the government; changed the oil business and rearranged public ministries. One law covered the mission to solidify Chavez's control over the state-owned oil company, PDVSA, to use a large proportion of its profits to fund welfare projects. Chavez even claimed that PDVSA had too many earnings, making the rich richer and the poor poorer. He went on further to introduce the land reform law, which allowed the government to make use of 'idle' land. However, the body that decides whether the land is idle or not is the government, theoretically making the government able to seize control of any piece of land that it deems 'idle'. Even though Chavez initially stated that the land would be used to help the poor, much of it was given to Chavez's party members who were exceptionally loyal to him.

Another infamous law similar to this was that of Hitler's Enabling Act in 1933 Germany. He had used his Enabling Act to announce himself as the supreme dictator of Germany, completely ignoring any hint of democracy, marking the first step towards fascism in Germany. The mechanisms of both Enabling Acts in Germany and Venezuela are extremely similar. Therefore, this Act can be perceived as a threat to democracy as both Hitler and Chavez used their Enabling Acts to restructure their governments dramatically.

## Key Stakeholders

### *Military*

Ever since Chavez grew his relationship closer to Fidel Castro and FARC, which is a Colombia based guerilla group, the military have raised their concerns and suspicions on Chavez, actively expressing their approval of his actions. However, Chavez repeatedly commanded them to execute untraditional missions such as making the Venezuelan military work with the Cuban military. This meant that the Venezuelan military had to open up their secret files and activities to ensure full collaboration with the Cuban military. Chavez had also forced the military to do other

unconventional tasks such as making the army back FARC guerilla attack groups to fight Colombian forces and helping build camps for a FARC safe space in Venezuela where they were provided with ammunition and military equipment by the Venezuelan army. A number of officers came out to the media to call upon Chavez to 'resign peacefully and take responsibility for your failure'. This message could have suggested early planning for the coup to overthrow Chavez by the military. However, Chavez abruptly responded to this message by proclaiming that they are traitors of the country and ordered their arrest and termination from the military.

### **Opposition**

There were many rumours of a potential coup at the time. Leaders from the union, military, business and civic sectors were all involved and deeply entangled in the rumours of this coup. The ambassador to the United States had also stated that Americans knew of a potential coup rising since late 2001 as evident through confidential CIA reports to the state department. The US official had also stated that he had met with Chavez one week before the coup attempt and stated that Chavez was well aware of the rumours but continued to undermine its relevance.

### **Press and Media**

Throughout this year, Chavez and his supporters have repeatedly accused the press of Venezuela of altering facts and undermining the accomplishments and endeavour of Chavez's government. Chavez utilised his TV and radio program, Cadenas, to criticise the media, who mainly endorsed the anti-Chavez opposition, showing clear bias against the Venezuelan government. Furthermore, the press and media continued to promote the opposition agenda against President Chavez as the opposition groups heavily relied on the media's aid to promote and spread their agenda against the president.

During the protests of the opposition shortly before Chavez was snatched by the military, the government planned broadcasts from television stations to present a message from the detained president. However, as Chavez's message was being relayed, many stations simultaneously broadcasted live opposition protests alongside Chavez's address. The president had commanded the closure of the stations that simultaneously broadcasted protests during his address as he justified this decision by claiming that they were committing treason to overthrow his government.

After the return of Chavez to the presidential office, nearly all of the popular private television channels broadcasted pro-Chavez demonstrations, in fear of Chavez ordering them to close and attacks from Chavez supporters. Thus, the Venezuelan public was heavily dependent on international news outlets from Spanish and Colombian channels and Western ones such as CNN and BBC. Near the start of December, several photographers and reporters of the media were physically assaulted by state

security forces and demonstrators during an opposition-led general strike. The pro-Chavez supporters gathered around news offices and continued to attack them. Coming to the end of this year, both private and state-run media stations have been lacking a sense of impartiality and fairness, as many offer propaganda instead of broadcasting unbiased news.

Despite all of the events that have led the Venezuelan media to such a chaotic climate, Chavez's government has failed to investigate and bring justice to the attacks towards journalists, reporters and photographers. This lack of government involvement to restore peace for media outlets encourages more people to commit these criminal acts such as assault on media outlets as their chances of being penalised are slim. Venezuelan government officials did not comply with the IACHR (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights)'s measures that ordered Venezuela to protect journalists from attacks.

## Section Two: United Nations and International Involvement

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### Major Countries and Organisations Involved

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1maB0GFOM-E2rQXX77ZHRsRC9I4HUjzLB/view>

#### Cuba

Castro has always wanted a leftist revolution in Venezuela, as he openly sought access to Venezuela's rich oil reserves. After assuming power in Cuba, he solicited \$300 million worth of oil from Venezuelan President Romulo Bentancourt. However, the President of Venezuela at the time declined due to Venezuela's strong relations with the United States during this period. Thus, tension was built between the two nations. Under the leadership of Bentancourt in 1961, Venezuela completely cut relations with Cuba, following its newly established doctrine that urged cutting relations with governments that came to power through non-electoral methods. Venezuela continued to show opposition to Cuba in 1962 by voting to kick Cuba out of the Organisation of American States; this would have dramatically reduced Cuba's security and economic growth. Other than the clauses of the new doctrine, Venezuela had other reasons to not cooperate with Cuba at the time as Castro allowed Cuba to lend monetary aid of \$1 million to the Venezuelan Armed Forces of National Liberation and other anti-government groups between the years 1961 to 1964, to fund military equipment.

The Venezuelan President in 1974, Andres Peres had initiated ties with Cuba again after a long period of tension. Even though Venezuela had amended its foreign relations with Venezuela, their relationship was not as tight as the Cuban-Venezuelan relation during the term of Peres's successor - Hugo Chavez. Fidel Castro heavily praised Chavez as he viewed him as one of the last standing figures of Castro's leftist revolutionary movement, comparing him to another infamous leftist leader of Venezuela - Simon Bolivar.

Commencing his presidential term, Chavez swiftly welcomed former Cuban officials and Castro supporters as part of his circle of advisors. This move made sense as the ideas that Chavez would have enacted during his presidency and what he advocated and fought for before, during his time as a military figure and coup leader. These ideas included the Paratatal institutes and Bolivarian circles, which were social and political groups of worker's councils that involved the participation of non-government individuals to have a say in implementing changes in programs for education and healthcare at a micro-level.

Conceding the fall of the USSR in 1991, Cuba wanted to be the new socialist body that provided economic subsidies in the name of the leftist revolutionary movement, replacing the role of the Soviet Union before its collapse at the end of the Cold War.

The relatively recent involvement of Cuba with Venezuela was not only limited to ideological support, lending monetary aid to assist leftist nations that are in need but also for the benefit of Cuba's economic growth. Fidel Castro wanted to accomplish what he had set out to do during his first visit to Venezuela as leader of Cuba; he desired oil resources from Venezuela with a relatively cheaper average price and increased investment relations that would boost both economies. In October 2000 under the Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement, Venezuela agreed to import 53,000 barrels of oil from PDVSA per day to Cuba at a reduced price. As payment for the reduced prices, Cuba agreed to lend medical specialists and health technicians for free. For specialised medical treatment like surgeries, Venezuelan residents could easily travel to Cuba. This heavily increased the number of medical professionals in Cuba.

Soon after, politicians in Venezuela called for political advisory, intelligence and counterintelligence support from the Cuban government to increase their internal power in the country. Thus, Cuba sent in just that with the addition of Cuban participation in the Venezuelan army. With the now increased Cuban Connection financially and militarily, Chavez introduced Plan Bolivar 2000 which was launched in February 1999. This new programme provided essentials such as education, infrastructure and food to impoverished areas of Venezuela. Cuba chipped in by exporting Cuban medical and educational professionals and a disclosed amount of security personnel.

Following the failed coup to overthrow Chavez, the re-instated president became more radical and trusted his inner circle of politicians and advisors less, similar to Stalin's Paranoia during the Great Terror in the USSR. Having difficulty relying on his own subordinates in his administration, Chavez grew more dependent on Cuba and Castro as Castro was one of the two allies that Chavez called for support during his short exile. With this strengthened relationship between Chavez and Cuba, Chavez requested for the Cuban intelligence service to assist him in staying in power from opposition groups such as PDVSA, the Fedecamaras (Chambers of Commerce), the military and his own subordinates. The number of Cuban uniformed soldiers in Venezuela became pertinently clear and as a result, the US military presence started to decrease as the US as its relations with Cuba were very negative due to their polarising ideologies.

### **The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)**

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is the most prominent guerrilla group in Colombia, fighting in the Colombian conflict since 1964. FARC states that they fight for the poor of Colombia and intend to provide justice for the impoverished through leftist ideologies such as socialism

and communism. During the late 1990s, FARC's members consist of more than 20,000 soldiers who are heavily involved in criminal activities such as bombings, arson, aeroplane hijacking, drug trafficking, money laundering, kidnapping of high profile, prominent figures like the 2002 Colombian presidential candidate - Ingrid Betancourt.

In 1999, peace talks were initiated between the government of Colombia and FARC, however, the negotiations failed and gave FARC an opportunity to expand beyond the Colombian border, this led to tense clashes between Colombian forces and FARC which led to a conventional assault on the Colombian forces. From 1998 to 2002 (the start of Chavez's presidency), Chavez began creating relations with Colombian guerilla groups like FARC as he desired to expand his party's influence in Venezuela through monetary and military aid.

After the failed negotiation attempt between the state of Colombia and FARC, Chavez contacted and gathered leftist revolutionary leaders to exponentialize the leftist cause. Chavez's appearance during Colombia's state of chaos and turmoil with guerilla groups allowed FARC to seek refuge in Venezuela after it had been exiled from its safe zones in Colombia. This all occurred during the first half of 2002, where the most Chavez could provide was indirect support through providing a safe shelter. However, following his return after the coup, the second half of 2002 allowed Chavez to become an advocate for the works of FARC.

On April 11 2002, many European nations and the United States of America recognized the new transitional government led by Pedro Carmona as the new government had more capitalistic ideals. The only two groups that Chavez called out for help were FARC and Cuba. A few days later, democracy was reinstated and Chavez was back in office. Weeks after the coup FARC agreed to provide urban and guerilla attack warfare training to civilian militias in an attempt to reinforce and strengthen the security and defence for Chavez. Later this year, Chavez's administration created a 'Contingency Plan', that detailed the purpose of military forces who were trained by FARC was to "attack, neutralise, or liquidate opposition supporters . . . through sabotage and targeted assassination."

### **United States of America**

In the early 20th century, a number of oil companies from the US were given concessions by the leader of Venezuela at the time, Juan Vicente Gomez, which allowed them to pioneer the most valuable resource of Venezuela's economy until now - oil. The relationship bound by oil between the US and Venezuela continued for decades to come even after the creation of the state-owned oil enterprise, PDVSA.

After a military coup ended in 1958, Venezuela sought to cut relations with the Soviet Union and its communist agenda and side more with the United States of America. This transitioning process was

fairly smooth as there was no hindrance to the oil industry. Years later, the Cuban revolution insinuated a conversation of the revolutionary leftist movement which resulted in Venezuela becoming even closer and more dependent on the United States. Cuba sided with the USSR and Venezuela embraced the US. Thus at this time, Cuba and Venezuela were forced to be enemies.

During the reign of President Peres, Peres had fixed relations with Cuba, creating a more friendly and less hostile dynamic between the two countries. However, the ultimate turning point of Venezuela's transition to lean to the left was during Chavez's term where he implemented his Anti-Americanism foreign policy. During the coup, America was one of the first countries to recognize the new government and claimed that it was Chavez's fault for his extreme leftist policies. After his sudden return from exile back to the presidential palace, Chavez did not hesitate to take more control of the Venezuelan oil industry through PDVSA; calling President George W. Bush the 'devil' in his speech in the United Nations General Assembly and leading a coalition of left-wing governments in Latin America.

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

The Organisation of American states is a compilation of governments in the American continent such as the USA and Chile. During Chavez's exile, most member states in the OAS were not sympathetic with Chavez's government. Despite this, the International-American Democratic Charter (IADC) was the first to invoke maintaining democracy and restoring the old government. The Secretary General of OAS, Gaviria wanted to utilise the Peruvian model in Venezuela.

The OAS tried building constructive relations with the Chavez regime government, however, Chavez still mistrusted the OAS as he developed a large paranoia over his inner circle after the coup. Chavez threatened to leave once the polarisation rose dramatically, but the efforts from the members of the Mesa project called the Friend of the OAS Secretary General, consisting of Portugal, Mexico, the US and more managed to implement and enact an electoral solution. Thus, the Mesa project received significant results.

### **Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

- **Chavez is overthrown by the military and is sent to exile (11/04/2002)**

This is the start of the coup which led to a new interim government led by Pedro Carmona that denied democracy. The US and other European countries quickly recognized the legitimacy of the interim government within hours of the coup.

- **Chavez returns back to the presidential palace, reinstated as president (14/04/2002)**

From here on Venezuela becomes increasingly violent. The military presence of Cuba exponentialized as Chavez solidified his bonds between Castro and FARC. Tensions with the US

also rose due to its announcement of recognition to the interim government during the coup and its hostility towards Cuba. Thus relations with the US dwindle.

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
2 February 1999	Chavez is inaugurated as President of Venezuela
26 February 2001	Venezuela decrease a new law requiring PDVSA to own a majority stake in all upstream oil projects
12 December 2001	Chavez fires four directors of PDVSA
11 April 2002	General strike by workers at PDVSA
11 April 2002	Start of the coup
14 April 2002	Chavez is reinstated back to the presidential palace
6 May 2002	Organisation of American States holds a general assembly meeting to discuss issues including the Venezuelan coup

## Section Three: Solving The Issue

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### Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

As this issue has only arisen this past year, not enough action has been taken to solidify Venezuela's democratic institutions and mechanisms and recover Venezuela's socioeconomic climate. However, a few actions have been done such as the involvement of the Organisations of American States.

#### **Commission for Dialogue**

Venezuela's government institutions are currently in a process of enhancing the stability of democracy within its country. Furthermore, the government is fighting for a firm consensus for a democratic government. On April 28 2002, president Chavez issued the creation of an institution called the Commission for Dialogue, chaired by Chavez himself. The former Minister of Defence and former Minister of Foreign Affairs were both personally chosen by Chavez to orchestrate the Commission alongside himself. The purpose of its formation is to increase participation from various parts and sectors of Venezuelan society. May 16, 2002, marked the first day of the commission in action, holding its first meeting.

This first meeting of the Commission came to a clear general consensus that: the country needs to tackle the issue of nationwide poverty; the current constitution is in need of repairment through amendments; new laws have to be implemented to limit the use and circulation of armament products in order to prevent these products from being possessed by local civilians.

#### **Dialogue Roundtables**

The Mesas de Dialogo (Dialogue Roundtables) was created by the government to expand access for civilian participation in government policies and actions. This body is split into five specified committees that crack into international balance, political, economic, social and land. In addition, these dialogues are to be nurtured in local governments and universities and educational institutions.

#### **National Assembly**

The National Assembly of Venezuela had created a specialised parliamentary committee that's purpose is to investigate events that transpired during the coup d'etat. Its members consist of Venezuelan parliament members that have been gathered from all political groups. The chairperson of

this committee is an anti-Chavez, opposition member. This uplifts the democratic magnitude of Venezuela as it allows a fairly reasonable amount of power to all of the various political affiliations. The purpose of this committee is to interrogate both opposition members and government supporters, including Chavez, regarding the coup d'etat.

### **Ombudsman**

Created under the Constitution in 1999, the Ombudsman promotes the enhancement and promotion of human rights in Venezuela. It nurtures an atmosphere of peace and tolerance, as well as raises awareness of democracy. However, the coup d'etat is evidence of the failure of the Ombudsman in achieving its agenda.

### **Possible Solutions**

There are many possible solutions to this issue that can be implemented to improve the situation of the Venezuelan crisis positively.

#### **Ensuring democratic stability**

Protecting democracy should be the priority when dealing with this crisis as the coup d'etat was easily instigated by the opposition groups due to a lack of legal mechanisms in Venezuela to protect democracy.

#### ***Increasing dialogue***

One method of achieving this goal is through increasing the opportunities of Venezuelan civilians from all sectors of society to delegate their communities and express their thoughts and concerns about certain internal issues. The agenda to increase dialogue has already been commenced through the Commission for Dialogue, however, the magnitude of its participation could be expanded in order to invite a larger spectrum of citizens in Venezuela. This can be achieved through the use of social media, national media outlets such as television stations and newspaper companies etc. to promote surveys and online forums.

#### ***Avoiding another coup***

If democracy was ultimately secure in Venezuela, a coup attempt would never have happened. Thus by setting legislations that would restrict the possibilities of a coup, democracy will be absolutely ensured. To achieve this goal: the judicial branch of the country should be left completely independent from the influence of politics and other sectors of the government to

avoid corruption and acts of misconduct; the involvement of active military and police officials should be limited and restricted in politics and governance in order to avoid a junta state, which will give the military too much power and leverage; elections should be protected and maintained transparently to ensure there are no unrecorded tampering in the votes; lastly, various government organs that's institutions uphold democracy must be protected and enhanced.

### Measures to certify human rights

Human rights must be upheld at all times in Venezuela. Organisations such as the Ombudsman and the Human Rights Watch have been advocating and promoting human rights throughout the country and inspecting if areas are violating or complying with the articles of the Declaration of Human Rights. However, it is clear that the Ombudsman has failed to achieve its task of keeping human rights intact in Venezuela as evident through the coup and its events.

### Raising awareness

Raising awareness about democracy and events occurring in Venezuela transparently will be heavily beneficial for its citizens as most private and public media outlets have lost a sense of neutrality, promoting propaganda under the fear of attacks from Chavez supporters. Furthermore, the protection of media outlets should be prioritised as the government has to do so, undermining events of attacks towards journalists and media outlets.

### Guiding Questions

- What are your delegation's foreign relations with Venezuela? Does your delegation benefit from PDVSA's oil exports?
- How has your delegation reacted to the interim government led by Carmona during the coup? Did it accept the interim government like the United States or did it reject the interim government like Cuba or was it neutral?
- Is your delegation democratic? Does it advocate for democracy?
- How has your delegation contributed to restoring constitutional order or socioeconomic stability in Venezuela?

## Section Four: Youth Involvement

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THIMUN-Qatar heavily advocates for Youth Voice and Youth Action, in this section we will be highlighting how you as students can be involved in your community tackling these issues. This logo made by THIMUN-Qatar represents **Youth Action** and shows that you as young people can get involved in such activities. We have curated a [SDG Booklet](#) to help you plan any initiatives or ideas you have and with [G.A.I.A.](#)

## Section Five: Resources

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### Appendix

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