



MES DOMINICANO POR LA PAZ
VENEZUELA DICIEMBRE 2021
UN RETO POR CONSTRUIR

From November 28th, 2021
until January 1st, 2022

MADURO
USURPADOR
ASESINO

SIEMPRE SIGO
LUCHANDO POR
VENEZUELA PARA
QUE NO TE LAYAS
DE ELLA NI CON ELLA

NO + CENSURA

A CHALLENGE TO BUILD

The Dominican Month for Peace reaches its fifth edition. After joining forces to accompany and help the Dominican family in Colombia (2017), Democratic Republic of Congo (2018), India (2019) and Ukraine (2020), it is the turn of Venezuela, the country with the largest oil reserves on the planet, but which for more than two decades has been going through the greatest political, social and economic crisis in its history.

For the Dominican family in Venezuela. It is a challenge to be able to convey to the whole world the complex reality that is being experienced in this South American country and that has its origin in the destruction of democracy as a system of government and a way of life.

Democracy is considered a form of government that empowers citizens to control their rulers. In the Venezuelan case, democracy was established since 1958, functioning without interruptions for around 40 years, today it is discussed at what moment we lost it (it was in 1998, or in 2006, some say in 2013 and even in 2016); in any case, analyzing the recent history of Venezuela, In 1998 with the election of Hugo Chávez as President of the Republic, a different democratic process began, known as participatory and proactive democracy.



This process consisted of re-founding and modernizing democracy through the change of the constitution, which took place in 1999 and is still in use today.

Democracy, in the Venezuelan case, was understood as the Welfare State, which a government should support through state measures to improve the standard of living and quality of life of the population, in addition to the voting in elections to determine the legality-legitimacy of such government; this vision was dismantled with the deterioration of the quality of life that the Chavista government caused to the country, which led to the understanding that there are many factors that must be taken care of for there to be a real democracy, such as: Rule of law, transparent elections and political parties, human rights, freedom, among others.



ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES.



RULE OF LAW

Refers to the State governed by laws and other legal norms, where the authorities are accountable. In Venezuela, according to the 1999 Constitution, Article 2 *Venezuela constitutes itself as a Democratic and Social State of Law and Justice, which holds as superior values of its legal order and actions those of life, liberty, justice, equality, solidarity, democracy, social responsibility and, in general, the preeminence of human rights, ethics and political pluralism.*

Today, the rule of law has become a failed state incapable of having a single government that is accepted by society and the world, and unable to control its territory. This is due to the fact that arbitrariness, illegality and illegitimacy prevail in the state institutions, breaking the Rule of Law that allowed access to justice for everyone.

Voting has been the democratic form par excellence used by citizens to settle political conflicts. The people understood that voting in elections was the most important component of what Democracy means, although elections are not enough for the preservation of Democracy, as sometimes voting does not necessarily mean electing.

In a democracy, all members of society can freely express their opinion and have their opinion heard and respected, even if they are a minority. On repeated occasions this has been the path that Venezuela has taken to generate democratic solutions to the crisis, but the bias of the arbitrators, electoral advantageous practices, persecution of leaders, political prisoners, and even the identity theft that affected opposition parties have not allowed this to be a favorable path, generating distrust and skepticism among citizens when it comes to exercising their right to vote.



HUMAN RIGHTS

In Venezuela, human rights were part of the Venezuelan democratic legislation, although their compliance was questionable, particularly during the social explosion of 1989 known as "Caracazo". The current Constitution recognizes, expands and elevates them. However, there are cases where it has become evident that these have been violated. The right to life, to food, to education, to a healthy environment, to health, to land, to personal integrity, to justice, to personal freedom, to participation.



The report presented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, and the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court have highlighted the serious violations of the fundamental rights of Venezuelans.



FREEDOM



In addition to having a meaning for individuals, freedom has a meaning for the organized society. The State with regard to other States; this is expressed in sovereignty, which is one of the elements for the State to fully exist. Venezuela, which for 40 years promoted an idea of democracy with its consequent system of freedoms in Latin America, with Chavismo, went on to promote the "Socialism of the XXI century" an unclear idea that seemed to be subordinated to the Cuban communist regime, in which, strangely, a richer, larger and more modern country submits politically to the dictates of a smaller one, this fractured national sovereignty.

At this moment, it is difficult to mention one aspect of Venezuelan life that has not been affected by the desire of Nicolás Maduro's regime to control everything. Media is among the most affected areas, with 90% of the print media disappearing, the country's oldest television channel being taken off the air and journalists who dare to raise their voice being persecuted with full force for their work.



POVERTY

Venezuela has reached levels of extreme poverty due to multiple factors, including lack of access to basic goods and services, skyrocketing inflation that does not allow for sufficient income, lack of decent jobs with fair wages, and loss of the quality of education. As well as the destruction of the oil industry, which for a long time was the main source of public and sometimes private funds.

This reality is the consequence of a system that has gradually become encysted in the State system, controlling all public powers and committing abuses and excesses.

The overall impact is that we have a country that has been economically and demographically crippled, with high rates of poverty and inequality, and with great skepticism about the future.

On September 29th, 2021, the Institute of Economic and Social Research (Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales, IIES) of the Andrés Bello Catholic University (Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, UCAB) released the National Survey of Living Conditions (Encuesta Nacional de Condiciones de Vida, ENCOVI). for the year 2021 conducted between February and March,

covering 22 states and reaching 17,402 households

The study reveals that poverty in Venezuela remains at "maximum possible levels of 94.5%", while extreme poverty continues to grow and covers two thirds of the country's households with 76.6%, an increase of 8.9 points from 67.7% last year. This is one of the fundamental causes of the Venezuelan exodus, one of the largest in the world with more than 6.5 million Venezuelans who have fled, doubling the number of refugees from Afghanistan.



No country is exempt from the reality that Venezuela is experiencing today and that can be driven by ideological currents and governments with similar ideals. We can affirm that in Venezuela we are living in a totalitarian regime with apparently democratic structures where elections have been emptied of content with voting where it is impossible to choose.



DOMINICAN FAMILY IN VENEZUELA

Responding to the Gospel call to care for our neediest brothers and sisters, the Dominican family in Venezuela, consisting of 21 friars, 195 sisters, 85 lay people and 42 young people, carries out 6 parishes, 32 schools and 15 social programs (nursing homes, foster homes, houses of preaching and hospitality, vicarages and refectories)



Through the Citizenship and Hope project, the Dominicans in Venezuela recognize that education (study) is the most effective way to contribute to the construction of a better country.

With a presence throughout the country, they care for more than 600 children in parishes, 21,815 children and young people in schools, 7% of whom receive scholarships from religious communities to pay for their studies and 56% receive assistance with food, uniforms, school supplies, clothing and footwear, spiritual and psychological care, for a total of 16,000 families, more than 400 elderly people in nursing homes and more than 40 girls in foster homes.

The CITIZENSHIP AND HOPE project is carried out through 4 programs that allow us to cover in a broad and organized way our general objective *"To educate citizens from the Dominican educational ideal that, in the light of faith and Christian and civic values, strengthen the defense of human rights in Venezuela with the exercise of citizenship."*

1.- Educating for Peace

In alliance with the Organization "Educating for Peace", we offer the children and youth of our schools an academic program aimed at promoting coexistence, conflict management and problem solving through teacher training and guidelines for each grade.

2.- Preaching Scholarship

We provide our scholarship students, their parents and the Justice and Peace OP team of each institution, a citizenship education program in democracy that prepares them to be promoters of civic values in society through the arts and ICTs.

3.- Dominican Student Center

With the opportunity offered by the Student Movement organized in each school, we provide students with the experience of living and defending the democratic and civil values of an electoral process, governance and accountability.

4.- On dead skin

The expression of St. Dominic de Guzman "I cannot study on dead skins, while my brothers and sisters die of hunger" inspires us to be compassionate and to take concrete actions in favor of the most vulnerable: meal centers, clothing centers, financial assistance to families, donations of food, medicines and school supplies, spiritual and psychological support.



FOR DONATIONS

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(-Emérta del Valle Ávila OP, Mother General of the Congregation Dominican Sisters of St. Rose of Lima, founded in Venezuela. Mariana Yaneth Rodil Mora OP, administrator of said Congregation)