



## **VENEZUELA: SHADES OF GREY**

ADOPTED AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF FEDERATION OF YOUNG EUROPEAN GREENS

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Over the last years, the economic, social and political situation in Venezuela have worsen and turned into a crisis of international relevance since the president of the National Assembly of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó, proclaimed himself Interim President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The country's crisis doesn't start here. Since President Maduro came to power, the economic, social and political crises have become more acute.

On the socio-economic side, the situation has been severely degrading and is marked by an important inflation as well as problems in the supply of basic products such as food and medical products. The economic blockade and sanctions led by the United States of America are one of the main causes of the economic crisis developing in Venezuela since the paralysis of its main economic activity translate into a lack of economic resources for the whole country. Since Venezuela has the largest proven oil reserves and that their export-derived revenue almost entirely depends on oil-related products, the economic crisis of the country is also due to the falling of oil prices.

On the political side, the rights of the opposition parties and critics of the government are not fully respected. Cases of intimidations, arbitrary detentions, ill-treatment and torture, sexual and gender-based violence in detention and excessive use of force during demonstrations have been highlighted, such as in the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) on the situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of 5 July 2019.

Venezuela's actual democratic situation is the result of the presidential elections of 20 May 2018, in which President Maduro won overwhelmingly, but where main Venezuelan opposition parties claimed limited participation and lack of democratic guarantees. After this event, organisations such as the office of the UNHCHR, the Organization of American States and the European Union, considered the elections fraudulent.

Following this situation, National's Assembly President Juan Guaidó proclaimed himself Interim President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, invoking article 233 (which lists cases in which the president shall be considered "permanently unavailable to serve"), 333 (Constitution's restoration) and 350 (the right to rebellion) of the Venezuelan Constitution.

While a majority of countries (around 150) interpreted this act as a coup d'état, others including the US and some European governments, consider it a legitimate act and unilaterally recognised Juan Guaidó as the legitimate president of Venezuela. The constitution states that a new election should have been held within 30 days, which hasn't happen. In addition to this concern, we can see that the opposition is also using violence.

It should be highlighted that the democratic system, the separation of powers and the rule of law are currently in a state of fragility. The legislative power has been duplicated, there is no independence in the judiciary and there is no control over the executive power. To all this, we must add the bias of the media in both Latin America and the Global North in the situation of the South American state. The role of the United States in the conflict should be made clearer. The recent developments in Venezuela should be seen in the light of the change of governments in other South American countries in recent years.

**Considering that the Venezuelan situation is neither black nor white, but different shades of grey, the Federation of Young European Greens, calls the European Union and European countries governments:**

- to facilitate dialogue between the parties in conflict to develop democratic guarantees in the country
- not to interfere in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela's internal matters to favour one part over the other
- to oppose and prevent any military interventions in Venezuela
- to respect the result derived from the round of dialogue and the subsequent working table between the two parties, endorsed by Norway.
- to encourage the unlocking of Venezuela's economic situation in order to reduce internal crises and to avoid that the Venezuelan population is unfairly punished and do not have access to fundamental rights, by calling for ending the US-led embargo.