

"On the systematic repression in Venezuela - human rights defenders and political opponents in the aftermath of the manipulated elections of July 28, 2024" - tabled by Kristdemokraterna (Sweden)

Adopted by the EPP Congress of 30 April 2025 in Valencia, Spain

Considering:

Emphasising the sovereign will of the Venezuelan people, who, through their vote on 28 July 2024, democratically elected Edmundo González Urrutia as President;

Venezuelan prosecutors and judicial authorities have brought charges against hundreds of individuals, using vague and arbitrary legal definitions such as “incitement to hatred”, “resistance to authority” and “terrorism”, with the clear purpose of criminalising political dissent and that both the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)¹ and Human Rights Watch (HRW)² have classified these actions as crimes against humanity³ requiring a strong and coordinated response from the international community;

Independent organisations, such as the Carter Center⁴, have denounced the falsehood of the electoral results announced by the regime; that the electoral process cannot be considered free, fair, or transparent, given the government’s systematic control over state institutions, including the National Electoral Council (CNE) and the judicial system; that opposition parties and civil society organisations have denounced widespread electoral fraud, presenting documented evidence that contradicts the official results; and that Nicolás Maduro seeks to remain in power by normalising a fraudulent democratic process, entirely lacking in popular legitimacy and genuine democratic support;

The Venezuelan regime, with connections to drug traffickers and organised crime, is sustained not only by internal repression but also by the active backing of international allies that provide economic, military and intelligence services, enabling state-sponsored violence, persecution and suppression of fundamental freedoms; that failing to denounce this fraud and remaining silent in the face of violence against political actors and dissidents effectively legitimises deception and facilitates the silent entrenchment of authoritarian regimes across Latin America; that these actions in turn continue to give power to destabilising actors, such as Russia, China or Iran, which undermine the legitimacy of the democratic opposition forces across Latin America, most notably in Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela;

¹ Inter-American Commission on Human Rights IACHR Report on Human Rights Violations in Venezuela in Electoral Context: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/activities/Speeches/2025/01_24_GloriaDeMees.pdf

² <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/venezuela>

³ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/venezuela-crimes-demand-urgent-action-icc-prosecutor/>

⁴ <https://www.cartercenter.org/news/pr/2024/venezuela-073024.html>

The European Parliament awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought 2024 to María Corina Machado, leader of the democratic forces in Venezuela and President-elect Edmundo González Urrutia, in a candidacy championed by the EPP;

We call upon all members of the European People's Party to:

Advocate for the recognition of Edmundo González Urrutia as the legitimately elected President of Venezuela and call upon the European Union to actively engage in the peaceful pursuit of democratic solutions aimed at the full restoration of democracy in Venezuela.

Reaffirm that Maduro's inauguration on January 10, 2025, constitutes an illegitimate usurpation of power;

Reaffirm the power of the vote as an indispensable mechanism and emphasise the importance of respecting the democratic and electoral path, demonstrating that the Venezuelan people aspire to a different future;

Urge the international community to increase diplomatic, political, and legal pressure to ensure that the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro is held accountable before the International Criminal Court for the crimes against humanity committed against the Venezuelan people, including systematic persecution, torture, arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances;

Express deep concern over the persistent threat of arbitrary detention, the ongoing persecution and constant intimidation against opposition members, journalists and their family members, which forces many into exile as the only way to protect their physical and psychological integrity, following the Cuban and Nicaraguan totalitarian regimes' model of eliminating all forms of resistance and opposition through political imprisonment and forced exile⁵ such that an estimated 8.000.000 Venezuelans have fled their country;

Urge the international community and EU Member States to safeguard the physical integrity and fundamental rights of European citizens arrested in Venezuela, including double nationals, ensuring their protection and access to fair and transparent legal proceedings;

Urge the political parties present at the EPP Congress to advocate democratic change. Emphasise the strength of the Venezuelan people, led by those who refuse to surrender, and highlight the importance of genuine, unwavering support from leaders, parties, and institutions that believe in and defend democratic values following the example of the European Parliament.

Urge the international community to take action to ensure justice and protect the work and leadership of María Corina Machado, who has led the primary process since 22 October 2023, playing a crucial role in upholding and keeping alive the democratic will of the Venezuelan people inside the country. Further, call for the protection of political activists who face

⁵ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/04/venezuela-brutal-crackdown-protesters-voters>

systematic repression, threats, forced disappearances and imprisonment, many of whom have been forced into exile or into hiding, like María Corina Machado herself;

Encourage collaboration between the European Union, Spain and other countries to which Venezuelans have been forced to flee due to political persecution and economic collapse in Venezuela; this collaboration should develop sustainable measures that address the needs of Venezuelan migrants, while also counteracting the root causes of forced displacement by supporting democratic restoration and economic recovery in Venezuela.