



## VENEZUELAN NEWS

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#### Venezuela's Maduro Renews Dialogue Offer as Violence Drags On

Mérida, 10th March 2014 (Venezuelanalysis.com) – Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro reiterated his call asking the Venezuelan opposition to join in peace talks. Over the weekend another government supporter was killed in barricade-related violence.

“I want to invite the MUD [opposition Democratic Unity Table coalition] to join the peace conference...the whole country has entered the peace conference with the exception of some sectors of the opposition,” he said yesterday.

Addressing supporters at a march of commune activists in Caracas, the Venezuelan president also called on opposition student groups to dialogue with the government. “They [opposition students] haven’t responded although I’ve invited them five times [to talks],” Maduro explained.

He continued, “Let’s listen to each other talk, say all you have to say. I’ll also say my truths and I’ll say them with kindness”.

However key opposition figures rejected the calls for dialogue and advocated further protests and street action.

Leopoldo Lopez, who is currently in custody for presumed incitement to violence, tweeted to followers from jail yesterday, “We ratify our objective: Nicolas Maduro’s exit as quickly as possible in the framework of the constitution. He’s a disaster, an assassin, and illegitimate”.

In another tweet Lopez said, “The exit will only happen with an organised people in the street making the dictatorship retreat”.

Meanwhile opposition leader Henrique Capriles wrote in his Sunday column that the opposition should pursue “more street activity” but “without violence”.

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While some protests are peaceful and make demands over high crime rates and economic problems, a radical wing of the opposition has engaged in a violent strategy of riots and street barricades to attempt to force the government’s resignation.

Twenty three people have died in the violence, and over three hundred have been wounded.

Thirteen of the deaths were caused by street barricades, either when civilians drove into street traps and barricades or when activists or security forces were shot by assailants while they tried to clear barricades from the road.

Meanwhile four of the deaths are allegedly related to the actions of state security forces, and in the other five cases the deaths were either accidents or the perpetrator is unclear.

Venezuela’s ombudsman is investigating 44 denouncements of abuses by state security forces related to mistreatment or excess use of force.

“We’re going to investigate any disproportionate use of force. We reject it and we want justice to be proportionately applied, I want this to be very clear,” said Ombudsman Gabriela Ramirez in a press conference last Friday.

The latest violent death occurred in the Andean city of Mérida on Saturday, when student and pro-government activist Gisela Rubilar (47), was shot by assailants while she tried to clear a barricade that was blocking access to her community.

Mérida state governor Alexis Ramirez, a member of the governing United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), said that Rubilar was “vilely murdered” as a result of “this situation of extreme right-wing groups, terrorist bands that are causing chaos and destabilisation”.

Other violence over the weekend by radical opposition activists included the burning of an athletics track in the eastern city of Ciudad Bolivar and burning and trashing of a ticket booth of the Caracas metro bus during a protest in the Altamira area.



### **OAS Approves Message of Solidarity and Support of Venezuelan Government**

Santa Elena de Uairén, 10th March 2014, (Venezuelanalysis.com) - The Organization of American States (OAS) approved in last Friday's summit a statement expressing solidarity and support for the Venezuelan government in light of recent events.

On 7 March, after two full days of heated debate, 29 states of the OAS voted in favor of a declaration lamenting the victims of protest-related violence in Venezuela, detailing the need for continued dialogue, and decidedly rejecting any notion of intervention or sanctions upon Venezuela's democratically elected government.

Only Panama, the United States and Canada voted against the statement. Both Panama and the U.S. made assertions included in the declaration's footnotes accusing the OAS of partiality, and pointed to diplomatic intervention as an imperative step for protecting human rights and democracy in the region.

US vice-president Joe Biden made his stark difference of opinion known upon his arrival in Chile this morning, where he will attend Tuesday's inauguration of President-elect Michelle Bachelet.

"The situation in Venezuela reminds me of the past, when strongmen ruled through violence and oppression, and human rights, hyperinflation, shortages and extreme poverty caused havoc on the peoples of the hemisphere," Biden said in an interview with Chilean newspaper El Mercurio. "[Maduro] should listen to the Venezuelan people, and look at the example of those leaders who resisted oppression in the Americas, or risk repeating the injustices against which they fought so bravely." Biden did not specify what exemplary leaders resisted oppression and whose oppression they resisted.

Maduro responded by arguing that Biden's remarks are revenge for the OAS's decision to stand by the Venezuelan government in the face of recent opposition protests and violence. "Why did Biden attack Venezuela upon his arrival in Chile?" Maduro asked. "It's because they know they were defeated in the OAS."

### **80.9% of Venezuelans are in favor of Peace Conference**

Caracas, 10<sup>th</sup> Mar. AVN.- An opinion poll showed that 80.9% of Venezuelans categorized the first Peace Conference, which was held on February 26 at the Miraflores presidential palace with the presence of various sectors of the country, as excellent, good or somewhat good.

According to a survey conducted by International Consulting Services (ICS), held on 27 and 28 February in which 800 people were interviewed in several states, just 14.8% believe somewhat bad, poor or very poor the holding of this Conference, which was convened by the government.

Before the question "Did you know that the first national agreement must be absolute respect for the Constitution," 91.3% considered to strongly agree, agree or somewhat agree, while 7.7% is somewhat disagree, disagree or strongly disagree.

As for the question: "Do you agree or disagree that a truth commission is open to review the economic situation?" 97.2% said they agreed or somewhat agreed against 2.7% that said to somewhat disagree or disagree.

On the absence of Miranda state governor Henrique Capriles at the Peace Conference, 26.4 % of respondents described it as excellent, good or somewhat good while 71.7 % described it as something bad, bad or very bad.

Regarding the assistance of the Federation of Chambers and Associations of Commerce and Production of Venezuela (Fedecamaras) to the Peace Conference, 92.1% considered it excellent, good or somewhat good whilst 3.8% stated that it was rather bad, bad or very bad.

Before the question: "Do you agree or disagree that actors and opposition leaders attend the Peace Conference," 91.3% answered strongly agree, agree or somewhat agree and 5.7% answered somewhat disagree, disagree or strongly disagree.

Also, 85.4% said they somewhat disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with protests continue across the country. Only 11.3% are in favor of keeping protests.



### Maduro hails government efforts to improve medical service



Caracas, 10 Mar. AVN.- Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro said Monday that thanks to the actions of the Bolivarian government it has been possible to promote development and improvements in the functioning of the medical system.

"(The system) has been lifted from underground, from hell where Commander Hugo Chavez found it," he said during the graduation ceremony of 2,585 community doctors at the Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas.

He stressed that the Executive has focused on training new doctors under a human ethics not with a market-based focus, willing to serve society.

The head of state stressed the human vocation of physicians trained in socialism, to deal with capitalism that commercialized the right to health and life, "and promoted a dehumanized medicine model, which is capable of seeing a being human dying and not provide care if he or she do not have money."

The education of community doctors was fostered by commander Hugo Chavez with the support of the Cuban people and government to strengthen Venezuela's public health system.

Continuing Chavez's legacy, president Maduro informed on Monday that 60,000 new doctors are being educated in the country.

### Fascists burn radio station in Tachira state

Caracas, 11 Mar. AVN.- Venezuela's Minister of Communication and Information, Delcy Rodriguez announced that the ULA FM radio station of the University of Los Andes was burned Monday by fascist groups.

"ULA FM radio station in San Cristobal was burned by violent groups! This is not protest, it's vandalism. This is not their fight, it's terrorism," the minister published on her Twitter account @DrodriguezMinci.

Furthermore, Minister for the Interior, Justice and Peace, Miguel Rodriguez Torres said in local TV that such actions are promoted by violent groups that "are upset because the rector of ULA (Mario Bonucci) met with us, participated in talks (promoted by the Peace Conference) and then held a press conference with the Mayor of Urena (Alejandro Garcia) and the governor of Tachira (Jose Vielma Mora), and that bothered them."

These acts of vandalism are part of a coup that right-wing groups are seeking to enforce and have left a toll of 22 dead, and damage to public and private facilities in the country.

In Caracas, vandal actions have been recently carried out against subway system Metro de Caracas in municipalities Chacao, Sucre, Baruta and El Hatillo, resulting in 200 customers injured, 16 of them due to blunt instruments, 40 Metro workers injured and material damages by over 9 million bolivares.



### Right-wing coalition hinders dialog, Opposition leader says

Caracas, 11 Mar. AVN.- The coalition of opposition parties MUD has been hindering dialog with the National Government, said Hiram Gaviria, an opposition deputy who recently resigned to his post in parliament and to right-wing party UNT.

"We have to go and dialog without conditions. The only exit is recognizing the other party and starting the most urgent works in every sector. Un Nuevo Tiempo (UNT) does not agree with dialog; on the contrary, they reject it and does not authorize any of its leaders to hold talks with the National Government," Gaviria said at an interview in private TV channel Globovision.

But the fact is that Venezuela wants peace, said Gaviria, adding that "The vast majority of Venezuelans believe in dialog."

Venezuelans "do not approve the extremes, neither violence of radicals in government nor this that is happening in some streets and states of the country," Gaviria stated.

"In the progress of Venezuela, the Government has the initiative to foster dialog and there has been intolerance from the opposition in some moments as in the years 2002, 2005 and now," the former deputy said about peace conferences convened by the Bolivarian Government over the last weeks.

Likewise, Gaviria said his intention is not to opt for a post in Cabinet, but "achieving a change for the good. We must generate short time solutions instead of collaborating with this situation."

### Jaua from Chile: In Latin America there is only room for democracy



Santiago de Chile, 12th Mar. RNV.- The Chancellor of the Republic, Elias Jaua Milano, said on Tuesday that "in Latin America there is no room for fascism, but for democracy and peace."

An assertion that he did because "Venezuela today is a victim of aggression against its democracy and political stability, which are intrinsic values in the South American region."

From Chile he emphasized that in Latin America "there is no room for coups d'état and violent overthrows of governments, and therefore we have received the interest and solidarity of all multilateral organizations in the region".

He also explained that "The meeting of the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) will be held at the level of foreign ministers because it could not be reconciled the agenda today with all the presidents. It will be held on Wednesday in Santiago de Chile.

At another point, he added that "It is already available to the Prosecutor" the investigation of the Chilean revolutionary militant killed by terrorists recruited by the opposition "while cleaning a street that was ambushed by armed groups".



### **Chile supports Venezuela's government in defense of peace and democracy**

Caracas, 12 Mar. AVN.- Chile president Michelle Bachelet expressed support for the government of President Nicolas Maduro, with the aim of preserving peace and democracy in Venezuela, said Wednesday Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua.

"We had the opportunity to talk for a few minutes and thanked her for her words of support in which she greeted the Venezuelan people, the president Nicolas Maduro and her commitment to democracy," he said.

In an interview with Telesur network from Santiago de Chile, where he is attending the foreign ministers meeting of Unasur to discuss the situation of Venezuela, which is under attack from the fascist right-wing, Jaua added that Bachelet said that Venezuela "can rely on Chile in all it can and that we require to ensure peace and democracy in our country."

The chancellor stressed that the support shown by the southern country to Venezuela is the same as that expressed by most heads of state in the region.

Moreover, he noted that there is an opposition group that "does want to dialog" but has not attended the Peace Conference convened by Maduro because "is being blackmailed by the owners of some media who want to destabilize the government."

### **VP holds peace conference with student movement**

Caracas, 12 Mar. AVN.- The universities will not be used again as spaces to carry out acts of violence in Venezuela, since educational institutions are territories of peace, said Wednesday Venezuela's Vice President Jorge Arreaza during a peace conference with the revolutionary student movement.

He added that economic interests unrelated to students and Venezuelan youth have tried to provoke violence in Venezuela within educational spaces.

"You are here telling the country that universities and educational spaces are territories for peace. We will ensure that from this situation Venezuelan universities will never again be used to carry out violent acts and conspiracies in this country," Arreaza said referring to all the violence that has been unleashed in the country since February 12, led by fascist groups linked to the Venezuelan right.

From the Morelos square in downtown Caracas where a march of university students ended, the Vice President expressed hopes that from the statement published by student opposition, in which they distance themselves from violence and said the struggle is peaceful, they will accept the invitation of the government to talk.

"We want to believe that it is that way. We hope that they will accept the invitation to talk with the government, then with all Bolivarian students and finally we will show the debate to the country," he added.

Arreaza said that one of the requests shared between pro-government and anti-government students is security within universities, which he said should be taken up for being paramount.

Vice President also dismissed descriptions that private media companies has given to the young revolutionaries such as "kowtowing to the regime." He added that this movement transcends any institutional situation.

He compared the student demonstrations of the previous administrations which were suppressed by the former Metropolitan Police and the National Guard and in which many young people died daily.

However, he stressed that since 1999 with the coming to power of Hugo Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution the student movement is respected and university autonomy has been given constitutional status...



### ... VP holds peace conference with student movement

#### **Arreaza: The Bolivarian Revolution has fulfilled its commitments to universities**

The Executive Vice President, Jorge Arreaza, said that the commitments made to the university sector in the country have been honored since the arrival of the Bolivarian Revolution.

“May analyze, whoever who wants to analyze, how the commander Hugo Chavez, and now President Nicolas Maduro, each year that has passed since 1999 has increased the budget for our public universities, and has honored the historic commitment that the Fourth Republic would not honor with its employees and teachers”, he said during the Peace Conference with the revolutionary student movement in Plaza Morelos in Caracas.

Arreaza noted that in 2013 was signed the collective agreement of university education sector workers with which there were benefited 190,884 workers, with an investment of 13,374,000 bolivars.

At this point, the vice president expressed the need to link the university system with the national productive system to promote national growth.

“Students cannot be stuck behind walls, or cages, or a college campus. Students must be in contact with concrete reality, with the problem of the people, in all areas, economic, health and nutrition. Students are called to build one system that gives us the greatest amount of happiness”, said Arreaza .

He noted that the Government is confident that students will lead themselves to that task and that Venezuela is “a reference for all mankind on how a youth can carry forward the social system to meet the most immediate needs, and beyond them the social life of Venezuelans”.

From 1998 to 2013, during the Bolivarian government, university enrollment increased from 785,285 to 2,600,000 students.

### Revolutionary students reaffirm respect for democracy in the streets



Caracas, 13th Mar. RNV.- Youth marches for life and peace, to reaffirm their commitment to the defense of democracy and sovereignty, stated the Minister for Youth, Victor Clark, adding that students are clever on the role that “corresponds to us, so we mobilized with our flag, ideas and joys, but with the power to ensure that the streets are a place to peacefully reaffirm respect for democracy.”

The Bolivarian youth mobilized on Wednesday from the Brion square in Chacaíto from to the Venezuela square in the Libertador municipality, Caracas, Distrito Capital .

Young people tell the world that they defend the ideas and the country that has been built on socialism during the 15 years of the revolutionary process, and reiterated the call for dialogue , respect and tolerance, said Clark.

“We the students are for keep forming and contribute to building the country , not to destroy nor to resort to the violence method or negating the other for thinking differently ,” he said.

The student movement today has a Bolivarian consciousness, which is the result of the achievements of 15 years of revolution in terms of social inclusion and educational massification , he said.



### **Unasur joins the National Conference for Peace in Venezuela**

13, Mar. RNV.- The Union of South American Nations (Unasur) ratified on Wednesday its support to the government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, urging the peaceful dialogue and respect to democracy, while joining with a committee to the National Conference for Peace in the South American country.

The foreign minister of Chile, Hernando Muñoz, made the reading of the final declaration agreed by the ten foreign ministers and two deputy ministers who attended the diplomatic meeting.

In the resolution was ratified the support to the request of Venezuela to conform a commission of foreign ministers of the regional bloc, that would travel to the country to accompany the dialogue in the framework of the National Peace Conference promoted by the Venezuelan leader.

A particular point was the fifth in the final resolution, where the regional bloc lashes and rejects any interventionist attempt that might seek to threaten or otherwise violate the independence and sovereignty of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

At the end of the meeting of Unasur, the Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua, stressed the importance of the agreement reached on Wednesday. "We emphasize the importance of this meeting, UNASUR has emerged stronger from this deep debate about the political values of the region."

"We appreciate the fifth point, where this body manifests its concern on any action that attempts to violate the Venezuelan sovereignty", said the diplomat. Ecuador's Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño said the support offered to the Venezuelan people confirms the commitment to integration in Latin America and the Caribbean. He argued that all Unasur foreign ministers are required to participate in and contribute to dialogue programs that advance the progressive governments of the South American region.

### **Venezuelan People Defender's Office praised by UN**

Caracas, 14 Mar. AVN.- The Venezuelan People Defender's Office was recognized by the United Nations Organization (UN) on Thursday as a plural agency that protects human rights.

The Venezuelan office was accredited with A status, recognition received by people defender Gabriela Ramirez on behalf of chairman of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Lawrence Mushwana, and High Commissioner For Human Rights, Flavia Pansieri.

At ICC general meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, Venezuelan People Defender's Office was accredited status A for complying with the principles relating to the status of national institutions, commonly known as the Paris Principles. Organizations that promote and monitor the effective implementation of international human rights standards at the national level are accredited by this classification, reads the ICC website.

This is the third time the Venezuelan People Defender's Office is accredited the top classification since its creation.

In Geneva, defender Gabriela Ramirez expressed that this recognition is highly important in moments when the Venezuelan office is victim of a national and international smear campaign. This classification, Ramirez said, gives the People Defender's Office "the legal and moral strength to defend human rights."

"This status A means that the country may fully confide in a sound People Defender's Office," affirmed the Venezuelan official.

Venezuela's Gabriela Ramirez holds the secretary general of the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Americas and traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, for the ICC general meeting.



### Venezuela has won 25 Gold medals in the 10th Odesur South American Games



Caracas, 13 Mar. AVN.-

The Venezuelan delegation that participates in the Chile 2014 South American Games (Odesur) won this Thursday three more gold medals and sits in fourth place in the Medal tally, totaling 25 gold medals on the sports fair.

Venezuela won its 23rd gold medal in the 10th Odesur South American Games by Rosa Rodríguez, who became hammer throw champion on the first day of track and field events in this regional tournament that takes place in Chile.

The 27-year-old athlete managed a throw of 68.61 meters to win the gold medal.

The Venezuelan track-and-field team participates in these 2014 Odesur Games with 34 athletes, 20 men and 14 women.

The Venezuelan pair of bowling, formed by Ildemaro Ruiz and Amleto Monacelli, did the same and became the Odesur champions. Venezuelan judo added the third gold medal of the day after the performance of Mervin Rodríguez, who defeated the Uruguayan Juan Romero in the final and was crowned in the 90 kg category.

The 2014 Odesur Games are taking place in Santiago, Chile, from March 7th to March 18th and the Venezuela team is composed of 380 athletes competing in 33 sporting disciplines.

Currently, Venezuela ranks fourth with 83 medals, 25 gold, 20 silver and 38 bronze.

The Venezuelan delegation seeks to overcome the 265 medals (89 gold, 80 silver and 96 bronze) that won in the previous edition of Odesur Games, held four years ago in Medellín, Colombia.

14 countries participate in these South American Games: Argentina, Aruba, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela, in 42 sport disciplines.