

Thursday 16 January 2020

P9_TA(2020)0013

Situation in Venezuela after the illegal election of the new National Assembly Presidency and Bureau (parliamentary coup)

European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2020 on the situation in Venezuela after the illegal election of the new National Assembly Presidency and Bureau (parliamentary coup) (2020/2507(RSP))

(2021/C 270/09)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela, in particular that of 31 January 2019⁽¹⁾ recognising Juan Guaidó as the interim president of Venezuela,
- having regard to the statements on Venezuela by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), in particular the declaration of 9 January 2020 on behalf of the EU on the latest developments on the National Assembly and the statement of 5 January 2020 by his spokesperson on the events in the National Assembly in Venezuela,
- having regard to the statement of 9 January 2020 by the International Contact Group on Venezuela,
- having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/1893 of 11 November 2019 amending Decision (CFSP) 2017/2074 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Venezuela⁽²⁾, which renews the targeted restrictive measures currently in place until 14 November 2020,
- having regard to the statement of 5 January 2020 of the Organisation of American States (OAS) General Secretariat on the situation in Venezuela and the resolution of 10 January 2020 adopted by the OAS Permanent Council entitled 'Regarding recent events in Venezuela',
- having regard to the statement of the Lima Group of 5 January 2020,
- having regard to the Venezuelan Constitution,
- having regard to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,
- having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the EU, its Member States and the European Parliament have reiterated that the National Assembly is the only legitimate and democratically elected body in Venezuela; whereas, according to Article 194 of the Venezuelan Constitution, the National Assembly shall elect among its members one President and the executive bureau for a term of one year;
- B. whereas Juan Guaidó was elected President of the National Assembly in January 2019 and later sworn in as the interim president of Venezuela, in accordance with Article 233 of the Venezuelan Constitution; whereas he has been recognised as interim president of Venezuela by over 50 countries, including 25 EU Member States, as well as by the EU itself;
- C. whereas the events surrounding the scheduled election of the President of the National Assembly in Venezuela on 5 January 2020 were an orchestrated parliamentary coup d'état by the illegal regime of Nicolás Maduro, marked by serious irregularities and acts against the democratic and constitutional functioning of the National Assembly;

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0061.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 291, 12.11.2019, p. 42.

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- D. whereas the President of the National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, was brutally prevented by armed forces from chairing the session, several opposition parliamentarians were not allowed to enter the National Assembly and press access to the building was also blocked;
- E. whereas the attempt to appoint Luis Parra as chairman of a new pro-Maduro bureau was null and void as the session was never formally opened, there was no chair of the meeting, no quorum count took place and no formal roll call vote was verified, as required by Articles 7, 8 and 11 of the rules of procedure of the National Assembly and Article 221 of the Venezuelan Constitution;
- F. whereas hours later, owing to the forced circumstances, an overwhelming majority of parliamentarians held an extraordinary meeting at the headquarters of the El Nacional newspaper, in accordance with the Venezuelan Constitution and the rules of procedure of the National Assembly which allow for sessions to be held outside of the legislative premises; whereas 100 of the 167 parliamentarians, fulfilling the requirements governing the quorum condition and roll call vote of Article 221 of the Venezuelan Constitution, voted to re-elect Juan Guaidó and his Bureau as the leaders for the final year of the 2015-2020 term;
- G. whereas a formal sitting of the National Assembly on 7 January 2020 concluded with Juan Guaidó's swearing-in as president, despite attempts by forces loyal to Maduro's regime to prevent the session from taking place, including by obstructing the entrance to the building and cutting off electricity inside the building;
- H. whereas Members of the National Assembly must be able to exercise their parliamentary mandate as received from the Venezuelan people free of any intimidation or reprisal;
- I. whereas the presidential elections held on 20 May 2018 were conducted without complying with the minimum international standards for a credible process; whereas the EU, together with other regional organisations and democratic countries, recognised neither the elections nor the authorities put in place by this illegitimate process;
- J. whereas the ongoing actions against Members of the National Assembly, including the harassment and intimidation of 59 Members by irregular groups and security bodies, 29 arbitrary detentions and 27 forced exiles, as well as torture and forced disappearances, are hampering the constitutional work of the National Assembly;
- K. whereas the situation of human rights, the rule of law and democracy in Venezuela has been deteriorating severely for many years, and in particular since Nicolás Maduro came to power following contested elections in 2013; whereas the political, economic, institutional, social and multidimensional humanitarian crises in the country are significantly worsening;
1. Recognises and supports Juan Guaidó as the legitimate President of the National Assembly and as the legitimate interim president of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in accordance with Article 233 of the Venezuelan Constitution, as a result of the transparent and democratic vote of the National Assembly;
 2. Strongly condemns the attempted parliamentary coup by the Maduro regime and its allies, and their efforts to prevent the National Assembly — the only legitimate democratic body of Venezuela — from properly carrying out the constitutional mandate extended to it by the Venezuelan people;
 3. Deplores these grave violations that are incompatible with the legitimate election process for the President of the National Assembly and constitute a further step in the worsening Venezuelan crisis; strongly rejects the violations of the democratic, constitutional and transparent functioning of the National Assembly, as well as the continuous acts of intimidation, bribery, extortion, violence, torture and forced disappearances, and the arbitrary decisions against its members;
 4. Reiterates its full support for the National Assembly, which is the only legitimately elected democratic body of Venezuela and whose powers need to be respected, including the prerogatives and safety of its members; insists that a peaceful and political solution can only be reached by fully respecting the National Assembly's constitutional prerogatives;

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5. Recalls that the EU stands ready to support a genuine process towards a peaceful and democratic resolution of the crisis based on the roadmap adopted in the National Assembly of Venezuela; stresses that previous attempts to address the crisis through a process of negotiation and dialogue have not yielded any tangible results; requests that the European External Action Service (EEAS) continue to work through initiatives such as the International Contact Group;
 6. Recalls that respecting democratic institutions and principles and upholding the rule of law are essential conditions for finding a peaceful and sustainable solution to the crisis in Venezuela for the benefit of its people;
 7. Calls on the VP/HR to step up the EU's response to restoring democracy in Venezuela, including through the extension of targeted sanctions against individuals responsible for human rights violations and repression, and to extend these sanctions to their family members; supports the EU statement in this regard;
 8. Calls for those Member States that have not yet done so to recognise the legitimate mandate of President Guaidó, and welcomes the High Representative's acknowledgment of him as the only democratic authority recognised by the EU; demands therefore that the political representatives appointed by Juan Guaidó be recognised;
 9. Requests that a fact-finding mission be dispatched to the country in order to assess the situation;
 10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the legitimate interim president of the Republic and President of the National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the governments and parliaments of the Lima Group countries, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States.
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