

Statement from Venezuelan organizations worldwide about recent political developments in Venezuela

Several groups and organizations of Venezuelans around world, including political parties and nongovernmental organizations, in view of the political developments in the country in recent weeks, due to the absence for health-related reasons of the elected President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias, who did not show up to take his oath on respective date prescribed by the National Constitution, have decided to issue this public statement, so in that sense,

WHEREAS

- On October 7, 2012, Hugo Chavez was elected as President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for a six-year presidential period starting on January 10, 2013 until January 9, 2019, according to the provisions of Article 230 of the Constitution.
- On December 8, 2012, President Chavez announced, through a speech on national television, that he had to be subjected to a new surgery for cancer recurrence he has been suffering from since June 2011, and in which he reported that it was possible that he could be permanently disable to take office as re-elected, and he clearly expressed his will that new elections ought to be called, as provided in Article 233 of the Constitution.
- That for more than a month, President Chavez is under post-surgery medical treatment in the Republic of Cuba, without having any public appearance by video, pictures or phone calls, so far, while official information about his health is sparse and incomplete.
- That it is one of Venezuelans' constitutional rights to have timely, accurate, and impartial information, free of censorship, as stated in Article 58 of the Constitution.
- That Hugo Chavez, in his capacity of elected President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, is required to take office on January 10, 2013, and that in the presence of a supervening circumstance, he could do so in front of Supreme Court of Justice, as set forth in Article 231 of the Constitution.
- That at the January 8, 2013 session, the National Assembly adopted a statement on the impossibility of President Chavez to take oath for his new constitutional term on January 10, 2013, backing him up in his right for a complete recovery.
- That on January 9, 2013, the Constitutional Court of the Supreme Court of Justice issued a decision, case 02-9113, interpreting Article 231 of the Constitution, in which it decided that President Chavez could be sworn after January 10 and that if he does not appear that day before the National Assembly there will not be an interruption in the performance of his duties as he is a reelected president, and did not set a date within which he is to return to taking office.
- That on January 10, government representatives from 20 countries participated in a political rally organized by the ruling party endorsing a violation of our Constitution, clearly interfering in our internal affairs.

IT IS AGREED

- To make public our strongest disagreement with the declaration issued by the National Assembly on January 8, 2013 and the decision from the Constitutional Court, case 02-9113, Supreme Court of Justice, which we believe are clear and flagrant violations of the Constitution, and they only serve to accommodate interests of the government's party, as no supervening circumstance exists because President Chavez has been suffering from cancer for over a year now.
- To demand, in exercise of our constitutional right for timely, accurate, impartial, and uncensored information, that the National Assembly request the Supreme Court of Justice to appoint a Medical Board to certify whether President Hugo Chavez is in physical capacity to take office, and if not, to immediately proceed to call presidential elections in accordance to Article 233 of the Constitution.
- To remain ourselves in permanent session and carry out every effort to contribute to the defense and respect of the Constitution and democracy in Venezuela.
- To provide moral support to all actions attached to civic and democratic order conducted by political organizations and civil society in Venezuela for the protection and safeguarding of the validity of the National Constitution.
- To categorically reject the participation of government officials from 20 countries at the political rally organized by the ruling party on January 10 in Caracas, which we consider to be a gross foreign interference in the internal affairs of Venezuela.
- To express our solidarity and support to the march organized by the representatives of the Democratic Unity Table for January 23 in defense of the Constitution, and to support and call to participate in the many activities to be undertaken abroad in support of democracy in Venezuelan.

Signed:

Venezolanos en el Mundo

Mesa de la Unidad, núcleo Chile

Venezolanos en Georgia

Juramento de Roma

Mesa de la Unidad, núcleo Galicia

Voluntad Popular, núcleo Madrid

Venezolanos en España AC

Mesa de la Unidad, núcleo Medellín

Mesa de la Unidad, núcleo Qatar

Venex México

Voto por Venezuela (España)

Associazione Civile Latinoamericani in Abruzzo, ANCLA (Italia)

Defensoría de los Venezolanos en el Exterior (DEVENEX)

Venezolanos por la Democracia Ottawa

Venezolanos en Perú

Venezolanos en Barranquilla