

# Hugo Chavez Dies, Vice President Alludes to a “Scientific Attack” on Chavez, US Embassy Officials Expelled over Alleged Coup Plot

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By Ryan Mallett-Outtrim

Venezuelan media today announced that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has died.

At approximately 5.30pm local time on March 5, Vice-President Nicolas Maduro addressed the nation, stating that after nearly three months of treatment in Cuba and Venezuela, Chavez passed away in the Dr. Carlos Arvelo military hospital in Caracas.



Hugo Chavez speaking to hundreds of thousands of supporters of the Bolivarian revolution at an election rally in Caracas, October 3, four days before he was re-elected president for the fifth time.

“Those who die for life, can’t be called dead,” he stated, after announcing that the president has lost his two year battle with cancer.

Hugo Chavez, who was 58-years-old, was re-elected president in October (for the fifth time since 1998) on a platform of deepening the popular and democratic socialist revolution his government has been leading. The Bolivarian revolution has greatly reduced poverty, nationalised strategic industries and promoted a range of new forms of participatory democracy.

However, in December Chavez returned to Cuba for fresh treatment on cancer, raising fears his health problems had drastically worsened. Chavez endorsed Vice-President Nicolas Maduro as the candidate for the Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), if new elections were required due to his health problems.

As late as last week, the government was maintaining that Chavez was improving in Caracas, after returning to Venezuela in the early hours of February 18.

Yesterday, the government released an official statement indicating that the chemotherapy has left Chavez in a “very delicate” state.

“From today, there has been deterioration in his respiratory performance, related to the immunodeficiency of his current clinical condition. At present he is suffering from a new and serious respiratory infection.”

Then earlier on March 5, Maduro alluded to possibly US involvement in a “scientific attack” on the president. Pointing to evidence produced after the death of Yasar Arafat that the Palestinian leader had been poisoned, Maduro said: “Eventually there will be a scientific investigation into President Chavez’s illness.”

On March 5, before Chavez passed away, two US officials were expelled for allegedly contacting members of the Venezuelan military for the purposes of launching “conspiracy plans”.

The Bolivarian Guard and police have been deployed on the streets of major towns and cities to maintain the peace. As the news of Chavez’s death spread, people across the country began gathering at major plazas. More reporting on the response of the Venezuelan people is to come.

[*Green Left* will be running much more commentary on the life of one of the most important revolutionaries of the 21st century so far, who raised the banner of “socialism for the 21st century”, as well as wjhat it means for Veneuela’s Bolivarian revolution.]

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