

# Venezuela: A Failed US Invasion in the Midst of a Pandemic

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*In the midst of a massive global pandemic that has killed tens of thousands of people and wrecked economies all over the world leaving millions jobless, some terrorists and mercenaries allegedly backed by certain governments had on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 attempted to invade the independent, sovereign state of Venezuela. Organised and trained in neighbouring Colombia, they had landed on the coast of Macuto close to the Venezuelan capital of Caracas. The invasion was foiled by the Venezuelan military and police with the support of the people. Several of the invaders were killed and a couple captured. The captured, both Americans, confessed on Venezuelan TV, that their aim was not only the overthrow of the legally constituted government but also the assassination of the president, Nicolas Maduro. Though the invasion has been thwarted, the captured Americans made it clear that the ouster of the Maduro government was an on-going operation.*

It will be recalled that a year ago, in 2019, there was a coup attempt led by an opposition political leader which failed miserably. In April 2002, a coup against the then president, the late Hugo Chavez succeeded momentarily but the people through mass mobilisation restored Chavez to his seat of power. It was the most dramatic expression of genuine 'people power'.

Coups against leaders who are determined to preserve the independence of their nation and defend the sovereignty of their people orchestrated and engineered by the Deep State in the United States often with the connivance of their allies in the region is the sad saga of Latin American politics. A number of governments have been subjected to this manipulation over the decades. One of the most infamous was the ouster of president Salvador Allende of Chile on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 1973. The most recent was the overthrow of the president of Bolivia, Evo Morales in November 2019. There is no need to repeat that the Cuban revolutionary, Fidel Castro, was the target of numerous such attempts during his long stewardship all of which failed spectacularly.

Cuba, like Venezuela, is also the victim of all-encompassing economic sanctions initiated and imposed by the US. As a result, both economies and the people have suffered immensely. It is remarkable that in spite of the sanctions, both Cuba and Venezuela have managed to protect their people in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. Indeed they have done a million times better than the nation that has punished them with sanctions which incidentally has the highest number of fatalities and infections in the world. Cuba has not only maintained a low number on both scores but has also extended generous medical assistance by way of medical personnel and equipment to numerous countries including those in Europe to enable them to fight the pandemic. In the case of Venezuela it is

important to observe that as of 4<sup>th</sup> May it had only 10 deaths and 357 infections. Apart from help from Cuba, Venezuela has also benefitted from the supply of equipment and the cooperation of medical personnel from China and Russia.

The success of this cooperation is one of the factors that has emboldened president Maduro to propose at the recent virtual Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) chaired by the president of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, that NAM help to organise the distribution of medical equipment and medicines among its member states. NAM he suggested could even set up an international humanitarian fund for this purpose — an idea first mooted by Chavez years ago. A humanitarian fund whose primary goal would be financing not only the purchase of medicines and equipment especially for NAM's poorer members but also sponsoring doctors and nurses if the need arises.

When NAM is directly involved in a concrete programme of this sort in an emergency situation, it would have a tangible role. The citizens of NAM would be able to identify with the movement. The Venezuelan proposal should be pursued until it becomes a reality. It is actual manifestations of cooperation that will bring people together in the post coronavirus era and establish the basis for a new just and compassionate global civilisation.

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*Featured image: Activists gather in front of the Venezuelan embassy in Washington, DC in March, 2019.*

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