

Planting “Regime Change” in Venezuela

By [Maxim Nikolenko](#)

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The myth of human rights playing a decisive role in the diplomacy of the United States is an important façade to be broken before touching the current political crisis in Venezuela. A noble crusade for democracy and promotion of human rights are applied by the State Department only in times when these enlightening qualities serve the interests of Washington.

Thus, the regime change is conveyed to the public as liberal intervention, while the predominantly authoritarian outcomes of such liberal interventions are rarely discussed in the corporate press. This goes without plunging deep into describing the Western protectionism of the most repressive regimes in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Afghanistan, Egypt and Turkmenistan.

With such resume of hypocrisy, human rights and democracy were used to formally glorify the overthrow of Ukrainian government in 2014, replacing one corrupt regime with a right-wing, marionette and [fascist-leaning](#) oligarchy. Human rights were cited in Donald Trump's [speech](#) to tighten the persisting and [human rights violating](#) embargo on Cuba. Promotion of democracy and human rights were cited in the West to justify liberal intervention, or in practice: a NATO-led slaughter of Libya, with David Cameron [declaring](#) the succeeding chaos an “inspiration for the world.”

The corporate media in the West is embedded with these political ventures. This means an overwhelmingly unfavorable coverage of certain governments is present only in times when there is a political agenda of suppressing or removing such regimes. A striking example has been Syria where the corporate press is actively involved in covering the conflict. That coverage overwhelmingly stands hostile to the Syrian government, echoing the U.S's openly stated interest of seeing the downfall of Assad. On other side, there is coverage or the absence of it on Yemen. For over 2 years, the Saudi-led and [American-supported destruction of this country](#) of 28 million had virtually gone unnoticed. Perhaps, the world's worst cholera outbreak and the world's worst humanitarian disaster don't worth the news.

Yet, there is news, constant news, covering the political crisis in Venezuela. Daily reports are published on the corporate outlets reverberating the soaring crime, food shortages and poverty experienced by millions of ordinary Venezuelans. If considering their perspective a valid fact, Venezuela has been a failed state for over 2 years, with editorialists anxiously waiting for a final default. An overwhelming blame for the validly existing economic crisis was attributed to the socialist policies of Nicolás Maduro's government, with Forbes [arrogantly celebrating](#) the setbacks of Bolivarian Revolution.

Certainly, there are failures for which the government is [responsible](#). However, the fundamental factors influencing the crisis had virtually been ignored. The slump in oil prices

and an outright [economic war](#) being fought against Venezuela, are out of discussion. The overthrow of a socialist government is.



Opposition supporters echo their leaders declaration that the Venezuelan government is now “officially a dictatorship.” (Source: [teleSUR / Reagan Des Vignes](#))

For over 3 months, Venezuela had experienced violent protests from the opposition forces who are calling for ‘that’ overthrow. Daily clashes are occurring between the security forces and protesters. At least 87 deaths had so far been attributed to the violence. Venezuelan fractured opposition to the ruling socialist government is politically right-wing, supported by local elites who lobby for the exercise of neoliberal capitalist policies, practiced by many regional oligarchic allies of the United States. An independent investigative journalist, [Abby Martin](#), was on the ground covering the demonstrations. Her [report contradicts](#) the mainstream portrayal of these protests. While the majority of anti-government demonstrators are peaceful, a small contingent of masked radicals is used on the “front lines” to clash with security forces. These provocateurs; sometimes outright [fascists](#), are the most effective elements whose actions intend to provoke the international response.

And the response is coming. The government is now being charged with repression of the opposition protests. Barely any attention is taken on the opposition violence. Breakdown of the death toll is not reported, with all deaths automatically being blamed on the security forces. Yet, such data exists. The South American-based TeleSUR published [a report with names of individuals](#) who lost their lives in the crisis. Only 6 deaths are blamed on the security forces. The rest were killed in [shootings](#), [looting](#) and lynching, exercised by the opposition mob. Other figures estimate the security forces to be responsible for over a dozen deaths.

With existing media blackout on such facts, it is not surprising that the American financial and diplomatic support for the opposition remains unchallenged. In fact, the American people themselves are encouraged to sponsor the protests. Embedded with the State Department, corporate press helps to circulate the message. An [article published](#) on Bloomberg describes in details how the protesters are armed and organized. This organization process involves helmets and goggles, worn by provocateurs on the front lines, coming “via private couriers. Portable radios and gas masks are smuggled across the border or sent on charter planes.” Venezuelan expats are holding “fund raisers” and their appeal

for support is shared on social media networks. The article was open in connecting these actors to the previous incidents of unrest in Venezuela. Indeed, “they failed to oust Maduro back in 2014.”

Crowdfunding is described to be the key driving force of resistance. Small donations do contribute to the ongoing crisis in Venezuela. There are many campaign pages on [GoFundMe](#) and [Generosity](#) raising funds for the radicals in masks.

In my search for such fundraisers, I found 17 pages, (15 on GoFundMe and 2 on Generosity), specifically raising money for the protests. At the time of writing this article, the combined sum raised on these campaigns tops \$102,584. The most [successful](#) fundraiser on Generosity raised \$44,768 in small donations. The opening dates of these campaigns correlate with the period of current unrest in Venezuela. Beneficiaries of these funds will perhaps be the most radical elements on the ground, those who intend to provoke the international response.

In the meantime, liberal British newspaper the Guardian [outlines 9 ways](#) readers can support “Venezuelan human rights protests.”

Undoubtedly, crowdfunding provides just a small fraction of the money used to sponsor opposition. The most [recent bill](#) in Congress aims to provide Venezuela \$9,500,000 on democracy promoting activities. Value of this sum would increase astronomically on the Venezuelan black market exchange. Once again, the regime change agenda is painted with “democracy promotion” and human rights.



Vice President Tareck El Aissami (Source: [Venezuela Analysis](#))

That “democracy promotion” also involves sanctions. It was the Obama administration who first imposed them on Venezuelan officials back in 2014. A year later, the non-militaristic republic was declared a threat to national security of the United States. Today, a list of sanctioned individuals includes 8 members of Venezuelan Supreme Court and top government officials, including the Vice President Tareck El Aissami, who was [labeled a drug “kingpin”](#) by Washington. If drug “kingpin” was the motive for sanctions on the Vice President, then a large circle of [politicians and oligarchs in Mexico](#) should long be veiled under similar restrictions. But Mexico is portrayed to us as a democracy while Venezuela is an authoritarian regime, requiring a package of democracy promoting measures.

Tough [economic](#) sanctions against Venezuela were also debated in Washington. If imposed,

they will only exacerbate the already difficult situation facing millions of ordinary citizens.

In the time when multinational corporations and Washington are [plaguing the economy](#) and interfering in politics, the Bolivarian Revolution moves on implementing its promises. In a span of 6 years, over 1.4 million new homes [were built](#) across the country to rehouse the poorest families from the barrios. Since the triumphs of Chavistas in 1998, the rates of extreme poverty were successfully reduced while the literacy rates uplifted. Enrollment into institutions of higher education was [surged](#) from 670,000 in 1998 to 2,500,000 in 2013. Social security now covers over 2 million retired residents. These achievements had virtually received no credit on the American news outlets. Neither is mentioned the fact that in spite of economic strains, Venezuela continues to make payments on its debt, thus eroding the widely speculated narrative of default. Understandably, the mentioned triumphs against poverty and hunger had suffered setbacks from the economic woes. The government's agenda, however, remains unshackled

Even before the economic crisis, before the scarcity of basic goods and manipulative use of currency devaluation, attempts were made to topple the socialist government from powers. Back in 2002, the Venezuelan elites had colluded with Washington to orchestrate a coup against the predecessor of Nicolás Maduro, the symbolic leader of Bolivarian Revolution, Hugo Chavez. They failed... The power of ordinary citizens had restored the democratically elected leadership.

Nothing has changed since.

The Empire and its multinational corporations maintain a strong interest in Venezuela's vast oil reserves, numerically the [largest in the world](#). For them, the biggest crime committed by the government was the use of oil revenues for empowerment of ordinary citizens, the people who were forgotten and neglected by previous administrations. Reinforcing political influence over the government and privatizing control over the oil sector became an obsession. So far, it seems the elites and Washington are prepared to use any diplomatic and economic means to achieve the outlined goals. Thus, there is no end in sight to protests. Meanwhile, the ordinary Venezuelans face a tough road ahead.

"I always say we don't want to be rich, our aim is not material wealth. It is to live with dignity", emphasized Hugo Chavez in an interview with a renowned filmmaker and investigative journalist, [John Pilger](#). The struggle to "live with dignity" continues for Venezuelans, similarly as it continues for the billions of people across the world.

It is not for the corporate Empire to decide on the lives of ordinary people and the expropriation of natural wealth their lands preserve. It is cannibalistic to use starvation as a weapon, forcing people submit to the cynically imposed ultimatums.

Venezuela deserves sovereignty! Venezuelan people deserve to "live with dignity."

Maxim Nikolenko is a Russian native living in the U.S. He is the founder and editor of www.alterbeacon.com

Featured image from Land Destroyer Report

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