

# Venezuela under Siege: The West's Ongoing Campaign against President Maduro

By [Michael Welch](#), [Yves Engler](#), and [Steve Ellner](#)  
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Region: [Canada](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Economy](#), [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*“Maduro is more dependent on the military as a result of the possibility of a military intervention in Venezuela. So, these sanctions, and this hard-line approach that really dates back to the Obama Administration is having a big impact on Venezuela in a number of ways.”* – Steve Ellner, from this week’s interview

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Western media paint a grim picture of Venezuela and the humanitarian crisis it has had to endure since 2014.

According to the [UN Refugee Agency](#), over 1.5 million people have left the country since 2014.

In July, Alejandro Werner, director of the IMF Western Hemisphere department, described the country as being “stuck in a profound economic and social crisis,” with an estimated 18 percent drop in real GDP by the end of 2018, and a projected surge in inflation of up to 1,000,000 percent, painting an economic situation in the Latin American country comparable to that of post World War I Germany or late 2000s Zimbabwe. [1]

In early September, Canada’s national public broadcaster CBC, on its morning public affairs program THE CURRENT, aired a segment on the [humanitarian crisis afflicting Venezuela](#). It reported on the food and medicine shortages that was driving Venezuelans to flee the country. Throughout the broadcast there was mention of scarcity in an oil-rich country, insinuating that the blame fell on President Maduro and his inept or corrupt ‘regime.’

Of course, there are some external factors influencing the situation there. Sanctions have been imposed on the nation by the Trump Administration with Canada among those countries following suit. The stated reason for the sanctions was in protest of the Maduro government was undermining democratic principles and fair elections. [2][3]

Anti-government protests in the streets have added to the turmoil. Sources indicated that 38 people died during the 2014 protests, and fully 137 perished in the 2017 protests. [4]

On August 4th an attempt was made on President Maduro's life using drones armed with explosives. This took place while President Maduro was addressing the nation during a live television broadcast on the occasion of the celebrations around the 81st anniversary of the Venezuelan National Guard. No one was killed and Maduro was unhurt. He pinned the blame on "the Venezuela ultra-right in alliance with the Colombian ultra-right" and alleged financing from Miami, U.S.A. [5]

Perhaps most disturbingly, a number of commentators, including [U.S. President Trump](#), [Vice-President Pence](#), [Florida Senator Marco Rubio](#) and the head of the Organization of American States, [Luis Almagro](#), have all made public statements to the effect that a military intervention in the country was "on the table" as an option for remediating the humanitarian crisis there.

This week's Global Research News Hour attempts to deconstruct some of the messaging around the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, the root causes of the country's suffering, and other potential motives for the economic, military, and propaganda operations being directed at the seat of the modern Bolivarian Revolution.

Our first guest Yves Engler tries to make sense of Canada's hostile posture toward the Maduro government. While Canada typically sides with the U.S. on all matters hemispheric, Engler sees motives that extend beyond the northern country's traditional sycophantism toward its southern neighbours. The author compares Canada's policy stance toward Venezuela with that of other countries in the region historically, and outlines some ways in which Canadians can exhibit solidarity toward the Venezuelan people.

In the final half hour, we hear from Steve Ellner, an American living in Venezuela for more than four decades. Professor Ellner provides more context around the humanitarian situation, details efforts by the Maduro government to address these difficulties, and exposes the opposition forces internally and abroad that are undermining the government, and not in the interests of the Venezuelan public.

*Yves Engler is a Montreal based political activist and writer specializing in dissident perspectives on Canadian foreign policy. He has authored close to a dozen books over the last decade. His most recent book is [Left, Right — Marching to the Beat of Imperial Canada](#). More of Engler's articles and information about his 2018 cross-Canada book tour can be found at the site [yvesengler.com](#).*

*Steve Ellner has taught economic history and political science at the Universidad del Oriente in Puerto La Cruz since 1977. His published works include '[Implications of Marxist State Theory and how they Play Out in Venezuela](#)' and an upcoming volume - 'The Pink Tide Experiences: Breakthroughs and Shortcomings in Twenty-First Century Latin America' (Rowman and Littlefield, 2019). He spoke to the Global Research News Hour in studio while on the Winnipeg leg of his [multi-city tour](#) throughout Canada and the United States. His blogsite is [steveellnersblog.blogspot.com](#)*

Upcoming tour dates for Steve Ellner:

Thursday, Oct. 25: 12:00 noon SALA lunch

[Thursday, October 25, Consumnes River College, Sacramento, California](#)

[Friday, Oct, 26 7:30 pm Task Force on Americas event](#)

[Sunday, Oct. 28, 10:30 am, Niebyl Proctor Marxist Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave, Oakland](#)

Sunday, Oct. 28, 4:00 pm Rossmoor w/potluck dinner

[Wednesday, Oct 31, 3 pm University of California, Berkeley](#)

Friday Nov 2 2pm Willamette Room, Werner University Center, Western Oregon University, Monmouth

[Friday Nov 2 7 pm Corvallis, Oregon](#)

Saturday Nov 3 Portland 5:30 dinner, 6:30 pm event: *The Hardship Imposed on the Venezuelan people by US-Canadian Sanctions*

Sunday Nov 4 dinner with National Lawyers Guild Convention members

[Monday Nov 5, 7:30 pm Olympia Washington](#)

[Tuesday Nov 6, 1pm Evergreen College](#)

[November 7, 6pm Seattle](#)

[Saturday, November 10, Minneapolis](#)

[Monday, Nov. 12, 12 noon, University of Chicago, Center for Latin American Studies. Foster Hall, Room 103 \(1130 E 59th St\)](#)

[Monday, Nov. 12, 7 pm, Evanston Public Library](#)

[Tuesday, Nov. 13, 12:30 pm Purdue University NW \(Hammond, IN\)](#)

Wednesday, Nov. 14, 1:30 pm Student Peace Action Network, McHenry County College Crystal Lake, Illinois

[Wednesday, Nov. 14, 6:30 pm Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin](#)

[Thursday, Nov. 15, 6 pm University of Missouri, Kansas City](#)

Friday November 16 University of Missouri, Kansas City, Latinx and Latin American Studies Program

Saturday, December 1, 1 pm Barco Law Building, University of Pittsburgh, co-sponsored by Pittsburgh Anti-Imperialist League

Monday, December 3, Columbus, Ohio

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The [Global Research News Hour](#) airs every Friday at 1pm CT on [CKUW 95.9FM](#) in Winnipeg. The

programme is also podcast at [globalresearch.ca](http://globalresearch.ca) . Excerpts of the show have begun airing on [Rabble Radio](http://Rabble Radio) and appear as podcasts at [rabble.ca](http://rabble.ca).

The Global Research News Hour now airs Fridays at 6pm PST, 8pm CST and 9pm EST on Alternative Current Radio ([alternativecurrentradio.com](http://alternativecurrentradio.com))

Community Radio Stations carrying the Global Research News Hour:

CHLY 101.7fm in Nanaimo, B.C – Thursdays at 1pm PT

Boston College Radio [WZBC 90.3FM NEWTONS](http://WZBC 90.3FM NEWTONS) during the Truth and Justice Radio Programming slot - Sundays at 7am ET.

[Port Perry Radio](http://Port Perry Radio) in Port Perry, Ontario –1 Thursdays at 1pm ET

[Burnaby Radio Station CJSF out of Simon Fraser University](http://Burnaby Radio Station CJSF out of Simon Fraser University). 90.1FM to most of Greater Vancouver, from Langley to Point Grey and from the North Shore to the US Border.

It is also available on 93.9 FM cable in the communities of SFU, Burnaby, New Westminister, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Surrey and Delta, in British Columbia, Canada. – Tune in at its new time – Wednesdays at 4pm PT.

Radio station [CFUV 101.9FM](http://CFUV 101.9FM) based at the University of Victoria airs the Global Research News Hour every Sunday from 7 to 8am PT.

[CORTES COMMUNITY RADIO CKTZ 89.5](http://CORTES COMMUNITY RADIO CKTZ 89.5) out of Manson’s Landing, B.C airs the show Tuesday mornings at 10am Pacific time.

[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](http://Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM) serving the [Cowichan Lake](http://Cowichan Lake) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 6am pacific time.

Campus and community radio [CFMH 107.3fm](http://CFMH 107.3fm) in Saint John, N.B. airs the Global Research News Hour Fridays at 10am.

Caper Radio CJBW 107.3FM in Sydney, [Cape Breton](http://Cape Breton), Nova Scotia airs the Global Research News Hour starting Wednesday Morning from 8:00 to 9:00am. Find more details at [www.caperradio.ca](http://www.caperradio.ca)

RIOT RADIO, the visual radio station based out of [Durham College](http://Durham College) in Oshawa, Ontario has begun airing the Global Research News Hour on an occasional basis. Tune in at [dcstudentsinc.ca/services/riot-radio/](http://dcstudentsinc.ca/services/riot-radio/)

Radio Fanshawe: [Fanshawe’s 106.9 The X \(CIXX-FM\)](http://Fanshawe’s 106.9 The X (CIXX-FM)) out of London, Ontario airs the Global Research News Hour Sundays at 6am with an encore at 4pm.

Los Angeles, California based [Thepowerofvoices.com](http://Thepowerofvoices.com) airs the Global Research News Hour every Monday from 6-7pm Pacific time.

Notes:

1. <https://blogs.imf.org/2018/07/23/outlook-for-the-americas-a-tougher-recovery/>
2. Virginia López and Sibylla Brodzinsky (July 31, 2017), ‘US hits Nicolás Maduro with sanctions after Venezuela’s ‘sham’ election’, The Guardian; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/31/us-venezuela-sanctions-nicolas-maduro>

3. [http://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international\\_relations-relations\\_internationale/s/sanctions/venezuela.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationale/s/sanctions/venezuela.aspx?lang=eng)
4. <https://in-venezuela.com/killed-during-the-protests/>
5. Paul Dobson (August 5, 2018), 'Venezuela's President Maduro Survives Assassination Attack On Live TV', [Venezuelanalysis.com](https://venezuelanalysis.com); <https://venezuelanalysis.com/news/13976>

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