

COMMENT

Venezuela: Document to be presented at the National Congress of the PSUV

Friday 19 May 2017, by [GÓMEZ Gonzalo](#), [Marea socialista](#) (Date first published: 24 June 2014).

Introduction

Earlier this year, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro called for the Third National Congress of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) to take place July 26-28. This will be the first Congress of the ruling party in Venezuela since its only elected leader Hugo Chávez died in March 2013.

The conference will come after the most challenging year yet for the Bolivarian Revolution. With charismatic and very popular Chávez gone, the right wing launched a new counterrevolutionary offensive to bring largely middle- and upper-class youth into the streets behind calls for Maduro to step down. Opponents of the government manipulated media coverage to falsely portray the protests as a fight of the majority against a repressive dictatorship. Meanwhile, the economic war of the Venezuelan capitalists against the state continues, deepening the worst crisis of the past 15 years of Bolivarian government.

In response to this offensive by the right within Venezuela—and its supporters in the U.S. government—to resort to greater violence and economic bullying, Maduro's government has followed a strategy of reconciliation with sectors of the capitalist class and the political opposition, through what Maduro calls "peace" negotiations. A dialogue about peace might seem like a good idea, but only representatives of the right wing, not those of the working class and popular sectors, have been invited. So far, the negotiations they have functioned as a way to push Maduro into making further concessions to the interests of the capitalists as a "pragmatic" way forward—though the base of Chavismo favors a very different response.

The upcoming Congress will take place in the wake of this change in political direction of the government. In a proposal titled "Sharp Turn," which Chávez made in December 2012, only a few months before passing away, he argued that the PSUV needed to start a "new cycle of the Bolivarian Revolution," involving a deepening of the revolutionary and democratic processes and a "sharp turn" towards socialism. But the policies pursued by Maduro today go against a deepening of the revolution. Maduro wants the Congress to "rectify and renew whatever needs to be renewed," but some within the base of the party are skeptical about what this means.

Gonzalo Gómez, a member of the revolutionary organization Marea Socialista (Socialist Tide) and co-founder of alternative media source Aporrea.org, wrote the document below, titled "Ten Proposals for Maduro," to be presented at the National Congress, in response to Maduro's calls for constructive criticism from revolutionaries within and outside the party.

Gómez has been a delegate to past PSUV congresses and is the author of two documents—"The Ordinary PSUV Congress I Could Be the Last One of the Revolution" and "A Congress to Bury or to Resurrect the Revolution?" in which Marea Socialista expressed its concerns about limits on what will be discussed at the Congress, as well as longstanding problems of internal democracy, reflected

in how this Congress is being organized.

This document was translated by Eva María, the author of this introduction. María will be speaking, along with Tom Lewis on “The Legacy of Hugo Chávez and the Struggle for Venezuela’s Future,” on Thursday, June 27, at 1 p.m., at the Socialism 2014 conference.

Eva María, June 24, 2014

Ten proposals for Venezuela’s Maduro

1. Put an end to the impunity of the right wing and make it pay for its counterrevolutionary offensive. Arrest and put on trial all the leaders and those financially responsible for the confrontations at the barricades and terrorist acts, including the murders that took place in April 2013. Make the likes of Leopoldo López, María Corina Machado, Antonio Ledezma, Diego Arria and others involved in coup and assassination plots pay with time in prison as well as financial penalties for the damage caused to the people and the state.

2. Revive the mobilization and the struggle of the Bolivarian people against the coup-plotters of right and in defense of the conquests of the Bolivarian Revolution. For the defense of salaries and collective contracts. Encourage—don’t criminalize—the legitimate protests of people who live from their own labor by respecting and promoting the fight of the working people and peasants. Orient this fight towards a struggle for anti-capitalist measures.

3. True and effective incorporation of the people into the decision-making process of the government. Real participatory democracy through social organizations, Popular Power organizations and the political organizations of the revolutionary people, their rank-and-file unions, workers councils and popular movements to guarantee that the government serves the working people and is in favor of the revolution. **Call for a Constituent Dialogue with the People and the Working Class** as the social and political subject of the revolution, given priority over the business elites and the right-wing sectors. **Immediately open public means to debates and the opinions of all defenders of the Bolivarian Process**, and offer the utmost support for community-based, alternative means of communications as a national network of those who fight against the right, and for the defense of the conquests of the revolution.

4. Apply the Program of the Homeland and the Sharp Turn as part of the legacy of Chávez, our Captain, without giving into the blackmail of the capitalists trying to impose on the government the 12 conditions demanded by Lorenzo Mendoza [one of Venezuela’s wealthiest businessmen, as a condition for participating in negotiations]. Change direction from reconciliation with the bourgeoisie to the implementation of decisive anti-capitalist measures, with the democratic participation of people who live off their own labor. Rectify the current orientation toward a “coexistence of economic models” and focus on the acceleration toward a socialist transition, “as put forward by the Captain during the “Sharp Turn” document for a revival of the revolution.

5. Not one more dollar to the bourgeoisie. Make the State monopolize all external commerce under social control, and with an emphasis on fighting corruption. Let the state be the only importer of essential goods to our people. **Centralize all dollars** in the country, which come in through the oil industry and are invested in foreign accounts—also under social control and

with an emphasis on fighting corruption. Repatriation of capital sent out of the country and confiscation of the property and wealth of tax evaders. Make public, and impose sanctions on, the businesses and people responsible for the fraud caused through SITME [Foreign Currency Transaction System] and CADIVI [Commission of the Administration for Currency Exchange].

6. Intervene to place under state and social control the whole private banking system that operates in the country, with the participation of bank workers, as a means of financing further economic functioning. Place under centralized control, with social supervision and anti-corruption measures, all funds managed by the public bank.

7. Urgent recovery of the state production of food and basic consumption goods, together with an emergency plan for the sustainable development of production, based on social, non-capitalist property relations. Expropriation under workers' and popular control of big businesses involved in hoarding, speculation schemes or black-market smuggling.

8. Increase the quality of life of workers, with a new general rise in salary to match the rate of inflation, together with severe measures—with the support of the people—to stop speculation and all manifestations of the capitalists' economic war.

9. Strengthen civic-military unity through opening the National Bolivarian Military's barracks to public debates about the situation of the revolution, in coordination with the revolutionary people and their organizations.

10. Ask and demand of the peoples and governments of Latin America their solidarity and support, with food, basic products and medicines to confront the emergency of scarcity caused by hoarding and black-market smuggling, together with the clearest solidarity against the right-wing's offensive and against imperialist attempts at intervention.

Gonzalo Gómez, Marea Socialista

P.S.

* <https://socialistworker.org/2014/06/24/ten-proposals-for-maduro>