

Hands off Venezuela! No to military intervention and economic sanctions!

The Kingston Peace Council condemns, in the strongest terms possible, recent actions by Western governments to intervene in Venezuela, which unequivocally denigrates the Bolivarian nation's sovereignty.

We state clearly and firmly that attempts by Western governments to intervene in Venezuela's affairs are counter-productive and harmful to the Venezuelan people. While the Kingston Peace Council encourages fair negotiation and reasonable dialogue between the unelected opposition and the government, we are worried about outside parties like the United States colluding with numerous governments and shady organizations to achieve an end result they deem to be in their self interest. US President Donald Trump has openly suggested that military intervention is on the table, which blatantly violates international law. Likewise, in a recent interview on Fox Business, US National Security Advisor John Bolton declared that US intervention would be a benefit for American oil companies.

The current machinations of the opposition and their colluding partners in the West to denigrate the democratic process and Venezuela's sovereignty cannot be tolerated. What is happening in Venezuela right now is extremely worrisome. Contrary to reports that Juan Guaido and his cronies are some sort of liberal social democrats, it is worth noting that he and his supporters are a part of a right wing movement that has dropped grenades on government buildings from a helicopter, burned food that would have gotten to people in need, sowed havoc and destruction in the streets, attempted to drone strike Maduro, and openly welcomed economic sanctions even if they are to the detriment of the people. Moreover, recent reports show that the opposition is planning on privatizing Venezuela's oil, a boon to the capital interests the United States support.

While the United States has been discussing regime change for years, openly admitted in establishment outlets like New York Times and Wall Street Journal, Canada has had a relatively large role in delegitimizing Maduro's government as well. In May of 2018, Canada banned Venezuelans living in Canada from voting in their own election. The Globe and Mail reports that Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland declared her support for Juan Guaido at least two weeks ago, stating "Freeland spoke with Juan Guaido to congratulate him on unifying opposition forces in Venezuela, two weeks before he declared himself interim president." Not surprisingly, then, Ottawa immediately recognized Guaido after he proclaimed himself president on last week. Moreover, CTV News reports that Prime Minister Trudeau and other top federal officials are lobbying European leaders to recognize Guaido as president as well.

The Kingston Peace Council demands that the Canadian government refrain from further participation in attempts at regime change. The facts are simple: the capitalists who set the agenda of the United States government want to control Venezuela's oil supply; these people want to pillage and profit from a right wing Venezuela that privatizes the oil industry, deregulates environmental protections, imposes austerity, eliminates the social production of housing, and much more.

The Kingston Peace Council urges people to consider the gains made by the Chavista movement: millions of social housing units have been constructed; illiteracy has basically been eradicated; education has been expanded; and poverty has been significantly reduced. The proceeds from oil sales have had a huge role in this social development. While there are problems that the Maduro government has not addressed, and concerns of government corruption

may be valid, the opposition's attempt to foment something akin to a coup is simply not tolerable.

Do not be fooled by the mainstream narrative that Juan Guaido is legitimate and accepted by the international community. He is not. Mexico's Obrador is, as of now, recognizing the Maduro government. Evo Morales is recognizing Venezuela's government. As his Twitter stated, "the claws of imperialism again seek to fatally wound the democracy and self-determination of the peoples of South America." At a recent UN Security Council debate, on top of condemnation from Russia and China, representatives from the countries of Cuba, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Suriname, Dominican Republic, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines spoke out against the opposition's attempts at regime change. Bolivia, Uruguay, Guyana and Mexico have called for negotiations between the two sides. South Africa has condemned attempts to violate Venezuela's sovereignty. India has also refused to acknowledge the opposition's attempt at forming government, as has the government in Turkey. Finally, New Zealand is refusing to recognize Guaido as an interim president. Canada must join the ranks of these nations and not intervene in another country's affairs.

Signed,

The Kingston Peace Council