

# BACKGROUND GUIDE: Third Committee – Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues

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## **Introduction**

The Third Committee of the General Assembly tackles issues around the globe relating to issues of social, humanitarian affairs and cultural issues. While human rights does not appear in the name of the Third Committee, the overwhelming majority of work on human rights is carried out through the Third Committee. Another focus of the Third Committee has to do with the treatment and displacement of refugees.

Yemen is the largest humanitarian crisis in the world. Over 80% of Yemenis need humanitarian assistance. The most negatively impacted in the crisis are children who exceed 12 million. Yemenis and their children are in desperate need for food, water, and medical aid. The pandemic left Yemenis in a much larger crisis since their healthcare facilities lack basic equipment. Violence and instability are the daily reality leaving peace to be no more than a dream.

The crisis in Venezuela holds its roots in political and economic troubles. Over 4 million Venezuelans have left their homes, making this among the largest displacement crises occurring. Since 2014, there has been an increase of 8,000 percent of Venezuelans seeking refugee status worldwide. The majority of these refugees and migrants are arriving in their neighbouring countries. Among them are families with children, pregnant women, people with disabilities and the elderly. Host countries in the area have been welcoming of those fleeing the country but as time goes by and the numbers only increase some are reaching a saturation point.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### **Complex Emergency**

According to the World Health Organization: “ A multifaceted humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires a multi-sectoral, international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing UN country programme.” (World Health Organization, August 2008).

Complex emergencies can often be characterized by extensive violence, displacement of peoples, widespread damage socially and economically, and the need for large-scale humanitarian assistance (Humanitarian Coalition, n.d.).

### **Humanitarian Assistance**

The World Health Organization defines humanitarian assistance as “Aid that seeks to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis-affected population.” (World Health Organization, August 2008).

As laid out in the General Assembly Resolution 46/182, humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. This must be done with full respect of the sovereignty of the states. Humanitarian assistance can be provided through three categories - direct assistance, indirect assistance and infrastructure support (OCHA).

## **Civil War**

A civil war can consist of one or many of the following disputes:

1. Concerning the governing body or territory within a state,
2. Are linked to the use of armed force, of which has resulted in 500 battle-related deaths during any given year during the events of the conflict;
3. Involving two or more parties, primarily one of the parties is the government of the state where armed force is utilized, and either one or many non state opposition organizations (IPINST, 2010).

## **Refugee**

By the definition of the United Nations Refugee Agency a refugee is “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.” (UNHCR).

## **Forum: General Assembly Three: Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues Issue: Yemeni Civil War - A Humanitarian Crisis**

**Chair: Awfa Al Rawi, Pallavi Maharaj**

**Moderators: Ximena Bailly**

## **Background Information**

### **Historical Division**

Rarely under the control of a unified government the territory of Yemen has seen a history of division, be it political, cultural or religious division. Only becoming officially unified in 1990 the century prior to this unification saw the country split into two nations. The northern territory was the Yemen Arab Republic while the southern territory was the People Democratic Republic of Yemen. The cultural division of these states were imposed by Ottoman rule in the north and British rule in the south. While these factors certainly contributed to the division of the newly united country, the cultural divide was present beforehand. Where the northern part of Yemen was historically under a Zaidi theocratic rule and the south was transformed culturally by the century of British influence. Division only deepened following the British withdrawal of the southern territory with the decades of rule under the PDRY, the only marxist government in the Arab world at the time.

### **The Movements of Yemen**

The Houthi people came out of the mountainous region in the far north of Yemen. Following the Zaidiyyah sect of Shia Islam, the movement is said to have gained fuel by locals fears of encroachment by Sunni ideologies (ECFR, 2015). Since their armed uprising in the second half of 2014 the Houthi have quickly expanded their control of the provinces in Yemen.

Beginning with taking the Yemeni capital of Sana'a and spreading as far south as the port city of Aden and as far east as the city of Ataq. As tensions increase between the parties involved, life in Houthi controlled provinces prove to be hard. With humanitarian aid unable to reach certain parts of the country the death toll only appears to rise.

Regarding the Southern movement, which was independent until 1990, are an umbrella term for the factions and leaderships calling for more autonomy of the southern provinces. The group is commonly known as the Southern Transitional Council and is largely disorganized. It has remained a soft ally to the current government of Yemen, being this group is largely allied to the United Arab Emirates (ECFR, 2015). Until recent events and allegations of corruption, the Southern Transitional Council has played little role in the Yemeni civil war. However, the Southern Transitional Council has recently taken up arms against the Yemeni government and are now the dominant force in many areas of the south.

### **Foreign Intervention**

The conflict and loss of life has by no means been a battle of purely internal conflict. With the internationally recognized government being militarily backed by many Arab countries and countries in northern Africa. The primary of these international backers is Saudi Arabia commonly being sold arms by western powers such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Then with the Houthi conflict in the north flooding into their neighbouring country of Saudi Arabia, with regular attacks between the two parties. Furthermore, chapters of designated terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIL have emerged within the chaos and have taken the opportunity to increase their influence and attacks in the region. With lingering allegations of the war being a proxy conflict among Iran and Saudi Arabia the foreign intervention in this conflict is widespread.

### **The Humanitarian Crisis**

The Yemeni civil war is considered the largest humanitarian crisis in the world today (UNICEF). Where by November 2018, there were estimated to be 6,900 civilians killed in the conflict, with another 11,000 wounded (HRW, 2019). The quality of life has reduced drastically to put Yemen in the path of becoming the world's poorest country. Repeated outbreaks of cholera are a common occurrence for the people of Yemen (HRW, 2019). With an estimated 14 million are at a high risk of starvation (HRW, 2019). With the current COVID-19 pandemic occurring throughout the country and medical supplies scarce the death toll is only set to rise further.

To make matters worse for the people of Yemen, the division has created a humanitarian aid nightmare. With Saudi-led coalition restrictions on the imports to Yemen have only worsened the humanitarian situation. Whereas on the other side there are allegations of Houthi forces blocking and confiscating food and medical supplies and denying access to certain populations of Yemen. Throughout the country aid workers have restricted access for them to carry out their duties and delivery of any supplies they bring..

## **Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

### **Yemen**

The country of Yemen, under the Hadi government, has seen a series of civil unrest. Initially fighting the northern unrest of the Houthi rebels and their supporters, the Hadi government has also seen the Southern Transitional Council emerge in the south. The country has also seen an increase in attacks from chapters of Al-Qaeda and ISIL, who as time goes on are becoming ever more aggressive. The Hadi government has been accused by their opposition of corruption and abuse of governmental powers. With the recent conflict on all sides, the Hadi government have also been accused of war crimes, of which involve torture, rape, and use of child soldiers. However, despite this the Hadi government remains the internationally recognized governing body of Yemen by a majority of nations within the United Nations.

### **Revolutionary Committee (Houthis)**

As they are more commonly known, the Houthi rebels are an Islamic political and armed movement that emerged from the mountainous regions in northern Yemen. They were originally founded in the 1990s gaining much of the territory they currently hold within the span of 5 years between 2014 and 2019. The Houthis have gained considerable control of most of northern Yemen territory and have reached as far south as the port city of Aden and have dared as much to enter Saudi Arabian borders. The Houthi rebels have also seen considerable support from loyalists of the previous president of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh. They have been resisting the Yemeni government and their backing of a Saudi-led coalition.

### **Southern Transitional Council**

The Southern Transitional Council is a secessionist organization comprising of 26 members, including governors of five southern governorates and two government ministers. They were initially formed in 2007 during the term of the previous president of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh. Initially not in armed revolt against the Yemeni government, they have since changed as further reports of corruption and abuses of power came forward. The STC claims to rule most of the territory in the southern regions of Yemen.

### **Saudi Arabia**

Among the neighbouring countries of Yemen, who have seen the conflict extend over into their southern border from Houthi expansion. Saudi Arabia is leading a coalition in tandem with the President of Yemen to combat the insurgencies throughout Yemen. They have carried out various military actions against the Houthis, including airstrikes. They have also been on the receiving end of the conflict in Yemen. With various areas in southern Saudi Arabia being targeted by the Houthis, primarily of these are their oil fields. Saudi Arabia has also been accused of various war crimes throughout this conflict. With many of their military actions either targeting civilians or directly impacting the livelihood of the population.

### **United Arab Emirates**

The United Arab Emirates are among the members taking part in the Saudi-led coalition. They are among the more active nations within the coalition, with having taken part in military strikes, and stationing troops within Yemen. This state also played a role in the creation of the Southern Transitional Council. Having supported their formation in early May, 2017 and have been complicit in their recent uprising against the Hadi government. The UAE have been accused on multiple occasions of torture, rape and use of child soldiers of Yemeni civilians.

### **United States of America**

The United States of America has not directly sent troops into the Yemenin regions occupied by the rebellions, however, The United States of America have claimed interest in the region due to the presence of Al-Qaeda and ISIL. This has often taken place in the form of drone strike. The U.S. has also been accused of being complicit in providing Saudi Arabia and Yemen with weapons and other military supplies. They have also aided the Saudi-led coalition in intelligence operations within the regions. For these reasons and the alleged actions taken within Yemen, the U.S. may potentially be complicit in any war crimes committed by the Hadi government and the Saudi-coalition.

### **United Kingdom**

Similar to the U.S., the United Kingdom has carried out various drone strikes in the regions where Al-Qaeda and ISIL are present. The UK has also seen continued support of the Saudi-led coalition by the supplying of arms despite internal backlash and court rulings. The UK have also shared intelligence with Saudi Arabia and the Hadi government about activities in the region. The UK faces ramifications of being complicit in any war crime that has been committed by the Hadi government and the Saudi-coalition.

## **Timeline of Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Events</b>
September 9, 2014	Fighting begins in the Sana'a the capital of Yemen
September 18-19 2014	100 killed in armed conflict between Houthi and pro Yemeni forces
September 21, 2014	Houthi forces capture the government headquarters in Sana'a
January 2015	Due to unsuccessful negotiations between Houthi and Yemeni governance, Houthi fighters seized the presidential compound, prompting President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi and his ministers resignation. President Hadi is confined to his residence
February 6, 2015	Houthi political leadership dissolved parliament and the formation of the Revolutionary Committee to govern the country
February 21, 2015	President Hadi flees the capital and travels to Aden. President Hadi publicly declares himself the constitutional president

March 19, 2015	Fighting between loyalist to the previous Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh and loyalists supporting President Hadi breaks out at the Aden International Airport
March 20, 2015	Two mosques linked to the Houthis and the Zaidiyyah sect of Shia Islam were targeted by suiced bombers. 142 people were killed and another 351 were wounded. The attacks were assumed to be al-Qaeda but were later claimed to be perpetrated by ISIL
March 22, 2015	With the support of loyalist troops the Houthi forces entered Taiz with little resistance. One protestor was killed and four more injured
March 24, 2015	Houthi expansion continued southward with fighting in Dhale and Lahij
March 25, 2015	Houthi forces reach the city of Aden, taking over the Aden International Airport. President Hadi flees the country
March 26, 2015	An coalition led by the Saudi Arabian was launched to intervene in in response to the events in Yemen. The coalition included Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Sudan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Senegal with intelligence support from the United States of America and the United Kingdom
March 31, 2015	Houthi forces entered a coastal military base on the strait after the Yemen Army opened the gates and turned over their weapons
April 21, 2015	A bombing campaign was officially declared by the Saudi-led coalition
May 10, 2015	A five-day ceasefire proposed by Saudi Arabia was accepted. This would allow for humanitarian aid to be delivered country-wide
May 12, 2015	The five-day truce begins. Humanitarian aid is swiftly delivered
May 16, 2015	Fighting breaks out in multiple governorates. At least 15 civilians were killed
July 21, 2015	After month of fighting in the city of Aden, forces loyal to President Hadi with support from the Saudi Arabian led coalition captured the city

July 22, 2015	Planes and ships from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates arrived in the port city of Aden filled with relief aid. A United Nation vessel with relief supplies also reached the port city of Aden
October 6, 2015	IS militants conduct a series of suicide bombings in Aden killing 15 soldiers affiliated with the Saudi-led coalition
August 20, 2016	Mass demonstrations in Sabeen square of Sana'a. Estimations of one hundred thousand attendants. Saudi Arabian planes flew above the population, bombing nearby areas leaving an unknown number of casualties
October 8, 2016	Saudi-led airstrike on a funeral ceremony kills 100 and injure another 500, including children
January 29, 2017	U.S. Navy SEALs executed a raid on Yakla, targeting Al-Qaeda presence. 14 Al-Qaeda militants were reported killed, another 14 civilians were reported dead, including nine children
March 21, 2017	The World Food Program reported that while not being in a full-blown famine, that 60% of Yemenis or 17 million people were in emergency food situations
June 11, 2017	A cholera epidemic resurfaced in 20 of the 22 Yemeni provinces
June 24, 2017	Estimates of total cases of the cholera epidemic reached 200,000 with 1,300 deaths
July 22, 2017	Houthi forces launch retaliation missiles into the Saudi Arabia province of Yanbu, targeting oil refineries
December 2, 2017	Ali Abdullah Saleh split from the Houthis, calling for peace talks
December 4, 2017	Saleh was attacked and killed by Houthi forces while fleeing
January 28, 2018	The Southern Transitional Council took up arms against the Hadi government, citing government corruption and discrimination. Gun battles erupted across Aden
April 2, 2018	The Saudi-led coalition bombed a residential house, killing 14 civilians and wounding 9



April 22, 2018	The Saudi-led coalition carried out airstrikes on a wedding in Hajjah, leaving 33 people dead and 41 wounded. The majority of deaths were of women and children
May 7, 2018	Airstrikes continued by the Saudi-led coalition killing 6 civilians dead and another 30 injured
June 10, 2018	Reports of 600 deaths in recent battles around Hudaydah
June 12, 2018	Reports emerged of a Saudi-led coalition airstrike on a Doctors Without Borders complex. No one was injured but the building sustained significant damage
August 9, 2018	A Saudi airstrike occurred in a crowded market in Dahyan. A school bus was targeted, killing 40 children and 11 adults
December 13, 2018	Houthi and Hadi forces agreed to a ceasefire in Hudaydah. Both parties withdrew from the city and were replaced by UN designated local troops
April 7, 2019	An explosion at a warehouse in Sana'a kills 11 civilians, including children, and wounding 39. Both sides deny involvement
June 23, 2019	Houthi rebels carry out drone strikes at a Saudi Arabian airport, killing a Syrian national and wounding 21
July, 2019	UAE announces partial withdrawal of troops from Yemen, citing rising tensions with US-Iran
August 12, 2019	Southern Transitional Council takes control of Aden from the Saudi-backed government
September 1, 2019	The Saudi-led coalition launched several airstrikes on a university being used as a detention center in Dhamar. 60-70 people were reported to have died from these strikes
September 24, 2019	16 civilians, including 7 children were killed in a Saudi attack in the Dhalea province
November 13, 2019	Oman becomes mediator between Saudi Arabia and Houthi rebels
December 29, 2019	A missile-attack by Houthi rebels struck a military parade in the southern separatists controlled town of al-Dhalea, killing five and wounding more

February 16, 2020	Saudi-led coalition launched airstrikes, targeting the northern province of Al-Jawf killing 31 civilians
April 9, 2020	Saudi-led coalition begins its ceasefire to support efforts to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic
April 26, 2020	The Southern Transitional Council declares self-governance over many southern regions of Yemen, including Aden
June 15, 2020	An airstrike from the Saudi-led coalition on a vehicle killing 13

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Constitution of the International Refugee Organization, December 15, 1946
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, July 28, 1951
- Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, September 28, 1954
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, January 31, 1967

## Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

### Omani Initiatives

The middle eastern monarchy of Oman was responsible for an initiative taken around May 2015 that sought a truce between the all parties involved. This plan involved seven points in which they thought a negotiation between the rebels and government could be achieved. The following were considered in this initiative;

- The withdrawal of the Houthis, and military forces loyal, from all Yemeni cities and the return of military hardware and munitions
- The restoration of the president Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi and the government of Khalid Bahah
- Early parliamentary and presidential elections
- An agreement signed by all Yemeni parties
- The conversion of Ansarullah (Houthi Movement) into a political party
- An international aid conference attended by donor states
- And finally Yemen entering the Gulf Cooperation Council

When this was presented the Houthis agreed to accept the peace talks, however, the Hadi government refused the negotiations.

## Possible Solutions

The region of Yemen has seen a historical division for much of its history and has played an important role in the development of this crisis. There is a need for peace to be fostered between the three main belligerents of the civil war. It would be wise to encourage the nations involved in this conflict to promote peace talks between all parties. It would be wise for certain

nations to refrain from further escalating the violence and destruction that has already taken place. The most immediate measure to ensure this could be to end all sales of arms to nations involved in this conflict. While sanctions and blockades on the country of Yemen would be ill-advised, as the ports of Yemen, be it Houthi, STC or Hadi controlled, are important avenues for humanitarian aid from individual nations, external parties or the United Nation to be delivered. It is important in a crisis that has seen the loss of so much life and displaced so many for compromise between the nations to be of the utmost importance.

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"Yemen Events of 2018." 2019. *Human Rights Watch*.  
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/yemen> (November 28, 2020)

## Appendix or Appendices

- I. <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen/> (Yemen Humanitarian Crisis)  
*This website provides a portal to various articles and statistics in relation to the Yemeni crisis*
- II. <https://www.who.int/hac/about/reliefweb-aug2008.pdf> (Glossary of Humanitarian Terms)

*A comprehensive list of terms useful for understanding terms relating to humanitarian crises*

- III. [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx?clang=\\_en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx?clang=_en) (United Nations Treaty Collection)

*An archive of treaties dating back to the beginning of the United Nations. Chapters IV and V would be invaluable to understanding issues relating to Third Committees.*

**Forum: Third Committee: Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues**  
**Issue: Venezuelan Strife - A Humanitarian Crisis**

**Chair: Awfa Al Rawi, Pallavi Maharaj**

**Moderators: Ximena Bailly**

## **Background Information**

### **Crisis and the Bolivarian Revolution**

With the election of Hugo Chávez in February 2009, via referendum, the Venezuelan people hoped to usher in an area of social, political and economic rehabilitation. His campaign promised that more attention would be focused on issues like poverty. One of his main aims was to make reforms to the Venezuelan constitution, which consisted of social programs which he called "Social Missions." Chávez wanted his political ambitions to resemble a revolution, with the improvement of living conditions for the poor at its forefront. Unfortunately, there is not any objective, empirical information about the social programs themselves (as theoretical entities). Therefore, the basis of studying these missions comes from observations made after their implementation.

The actual actions behind these social programs were not uniquely created by Chávez himself, but had existed during previous governments. For example, providing food directly to impoverished areas, to remove all the costs incurred by inbetween labour, was an action taken by the Caldera government from 1993-1998. Regardless of this, the missions were generally good attempts to channel government funds towards society's social deficits. However, they are criticized for merely providing remedial assistance for the issues plaguing Venezuelans rather than remove the causes. Furthermore, the programs were executed in a drastically smaller size than they were announced or promised to be in. Finally, there was no found relationship between social indicators of Venezuelan society (such as rates of employment, literacy and homelessness) and the introduction of these social missions to the country. The attempted revolutionary governance taken on by Chávez is subject to much debate.

### **Election and the Protest of 2014**

The protests happened due to the municipal elections in 2013 which resulted in an increase in the municipalities obtained by the opposition and a decrease in the number of people who voted. This led to a minority political opinion which connected to the wills of the people and seeking a short term political change. They were minimal changes but relevant to the Mesa Unidad Democrática: the democratic and social parties of Alianza Bravo led by Antonio Ledezma, Pueblo and Voluntad Popular led by Leopoldo Lopez and the alliance of liberals and independents "Vente" led by Maria Corina Machado. Similarly, there were student protests in Merida and Tachira which led to student deaths.

The rejection of these measures by the government led to more deaths and more protests that lasted until May 2014. Most of the protests were pacific, opposition organizations and unions claiming their right to protest and the liberty of the detained. However, the violent uprisings by indigenous people seeking Maduro's resignation were controlled with force and violence. There was a series of violations to human rights under international and venezuelan law.

## **Refugee Crisis**

Almost 5 million refugees and migrants left Venezuela due to the ongoing political and socio-economic instability. The largest external displacement crisis in Latin America's history. Most of the Venezuelans (4.3M) have stayed within the region. Contrastingly, Colombia had the greatest number of migrants with 1.8M. Only hosting nations include Peru (861,000), Chile (455,500) and Ecuador (366,600). Thousands of Venezuelans crossed latin american borders by foot without knowing their destination. They left behind their families, others were moving to be reunited with them. They used different routes, including land, plane and sea. Many left without documents to cross borders, they face great risks at hand of smugglers and traffickers. Countries in the region have opened their borders providing incoming venezuelans with healthcare, education and employment.

## **Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

### **Venezuela**

Venezuelan society has been faced with a humanitarian crisis, characterized by far-reaching levels of poverty, and recurrent shortages of essential, life-sustaining resources such as food and medicine. Venezuela's economy has been dependent on its revenue from oil for several years, but due to poor economic management of the country and corruption of the national government, funds generated from this resource were not sufficiently put toward economic development or the maintenance of infrastructure. Secondly, when the value of oil suffered a decrease by large proportions in 2016, this caused Venezuela's economy some sizable damage, due to their almost sole reliance on the oil industry for revenue from exports, and significant reliance on oil to form the country's GDP. Furthermore, the actual production of oil in Venezuela was slowed in 2016; also due to poor governance of the country.

### **United States**

As of January 2020, 31% of claims filed with the American Citizenship and Immigration Services were from Venezuelans. While South America and the Caribbean are host to the majority of refugees from Venezuela, Spain and America are two countries outside of the said region which provide refuge to the most asylum-seekers. The 2019 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela was/is an effort to channel funding to crucial areas of the crisis; while only 23.9% funded as of July 31st, 2019, over two-thirds of that funding was contributed by The States.

## **Colombia**

Colombia is one of the countries on the border of Venezuela. The assistance the country has given to the refugees of Venezuela has been costly for the country. However, they have still been able to continue to accept refugees over the years. As of August 2019, there were 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees in Colombia, making it the highest amount out of other host nations.

## **European Union**

The European Union (EU) has imposed targeted sanctions on Maduro officials and adopted an arms embargo against Venezuela. The EU Parliament and most member states have recognized the Guaidó government. However, the EU has opposed military intervention and “any form of violence” in the country, most recently in an April 30, 2019, statement. Instead, the EU backed the formation of an International Contact Group (ICG).

## **Peru**

The Venezuelan crisis has affected Peru in multiple ways, there has been a massive immigration through Colombia. During the precedence of Kuchinski, he allowed Venezuelans to arrive in Peru without passport or visa. This led to a big discontent among the population and a high influx of illegal workers in the low-income regions of the capital, Lima. This generated great discontent among the workers concentrated in those low-income areas. Moreover, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a big population of Venezuelans have left Peru in an attempt to leave the health crisis.

## **Organization of American States**

There is no consensus in the OAS regarding the Venezuelan crisis. There is none among the countries that are part of the body and there does not seem to be one between the secretary general, Luis Almagro, and the delegations represented at the headquarters in Washington. Likewise, there is a clear division between the Spanish-speaking nations (and Brazil) and the Anglo-Saxon and French-speaking Caribbean world when it comes to voting on Venezuela.

## **Russia**

It has a fundamental political influence in the Venezuelan government, perhaps proportional to its dependence on the oil it receives from Venezuela. His advice on security and intelligence issues has been decisive for Maduro to remain in power. The Cuban intelligence network operates, fundamentally in the security apparatus. The Cuban government knows that, if Maduro falls, they would go for them and make every effort to avoid the Bolivarian collapse.

## **China**

The debt that Venezuela has with China represents 40% of all its external debt. They are approximately 60 billion dollars which include an oil guarantee. That is, if Venezuela cannot pay, the Chinese are charged directly in oil. This apart from investments in mining (coltan, gold, etc.), which gives them access to strategic resources for their development.

The People's Republic of China is interested in promoting political stability and negotiation in Venezuela. Their goal is to become the first world power before 2049 and they do not seek early and unnecessary conflicts with the US. However, they have been firm in their refusal to recognize a government parallel to Maduro's and have blocked US initiatives at the UN. The strong commercial rivalry unleashed by the Trump administration against China benefits Maduro as a side effect, as it encourages the Chinese to maintain a government uncomfortable with North American interests in the region.

### **Cuba**

It has a fundamental political influence in the Venezuelan government, perhaps proportional to its dependence on the oil it receives from Venezuela. His advice on security and intelligence issues has been decisive for Maduro to remain in power. The Cuban intelligence network operates, fundamentally in the security apparatus. The Cuban government knows that, if Maduro falls, they would go for them and make every effort to avoid the Bolivarian collapse.

### **FANB**

The Bolivarian National Armed Forces keeps the Maduro government in power. They have their own interests, political participation, they run companies, ministries and have access to resources. An armed body led by the military with an insurrectionary, nationalist, Bolivarian and anti-imperialist tradition.

The United States and the opposition leadership have bet on its collapse. For this reason, its top brass have also been sanctioned by the Trump administration. But when one of these commanders recognizes Guaidó as "president", any type of sanction is withdrawn. Miraculously he stops being corrupt, genocidal or a violator of Human Rights.

## **Timeline of Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Events</b>
June 2, 2010	The date marking an economic crisis of hyperinflation, starvation, disease and crime. The resulting effects leading to mass emigration from Venezuela. President Chavez declare an 'economic war'
August 2, 2010	More than 120,000 tons of food were found rotting at the port of Puerto Cabello following government nationalization of the port
August, 2011	Food prices in Caracas, the capital, are found to be nine times higher than when the price controls were introduced
January, 2012	Shortages of food and other supplies rise to levels not seen since the 2008 shortages



March 5, 2013	President Chavez dies of cancer at the age of 58
February, 2014	Shortage rates continue to increase and reach a high of 28%
February 12, 2014	Major opposition protests begin. Protests turn violent after government security forces allegedly used excessive force and shot at groups of unarmed people. Two protestors die
February 13, 2014	Calls for opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez to be detained for the previous 'violent' protests that resulted in deaths begin. A judge accepts this call. Protests continue throughout the following months
April 14, 2014	Nicolas Maduro is elected President of Venezuela
December 30, 2014	The Venezuelan Central Bank announces the country had entered a recession due to the plummeting oil prices. Inflation had reached 63 percent at this point
April 23, 2015	By this date, an estimated 1.8 million Venezuelans had emigrated within the past decade
December 6, 2015	Legislative elections are held, the opposition party gains a two-thirds supermajority in the National Assembly. The Supreme Courts blocked four of the newly elected lawmakers from joining the assembly
May 11, 2016	President Chavez encourages Venezuelans to cultivate their own food. Experts warn Venezuela is entering a period of famine
July 6, 2016	Over 500 women stormed past Venezuelan National Guard troops to enter Colombia to find food
July 10, 2016	Venezuela reopens border with Colombia for 12 hours. 35,000 Venezuelans traveled into Colombia in that period
July 16-17, 2016	Over 123,000 Venezuelans have crossed into Colombia seeking food
July 18, 2016	Colombian government sets up a 'humanitarian corridor' for the coming Venezuelans
January, 2017	Shortages of medicine reach 85%

March, 2017	Basic grocery prices reach prices four times the monthly minimum wage
April, 2017	More than 11% of the children in Venezuela are suffering from malnutrition
July 8, 2017	Unemployment has estimated to have risen past 25%
July 30, 2017	Voters elected members to the Constituent Assembly, of which was created with intent to change the constitution. This body serving as a parallel to the National Assembly
August 4, 2017	The Constituent Assembly was officially sworn in
January 24, 2018	The average Family Food Basket price in Venezuela for one's needs rose to 16,501,362.78 bolivares. While minimum wage in Venezuela was only 177,507.43 bolivares
February 9, 2018	A group United Nations Special Procedures and the Special Rapporteurs issues a statement that much of the population of Venezuela is starving
April 9, 2018 exchange	The Venezuelan currency, bolivar soberano, reached an rate of 300,000 bolivar to \$1 US
April 19, 2018	A meeting between a dozen European and Latin American countries met to investigate a corrupt import program of the Maduro government, including CLAP
May 17, 2018	Colombian government seizes 25,200 CLAP boxes containing approximately 400 tons of decomposing food. This food was to be distributed among the Venezuelan public
October 18, 2018	The Venezuelan government and Mexican individuals were accused by Mexican prosecutors of buying cheap quality food products for CLAP and exporting them to Venezuela, doubling the value for sale.
May 20, 2018	Presidential elections were held, and Maduro was reelected, despite claims of fraud from the opposition coalition
November 8, 2018	The United Nations Refugee Agency estimates that over 3 million people had fled Venezuela

January 6, 2019	Venezuela's National Assembly rejects Nicolas Maduro's second term, declaring the chamber to be the legitimate representative of the people of Venezuela
January 10, 2019	Nicolas Maduro is officially inaugurated for his second term. The US, the EU and the Latin American-based Lima Group of 13 nations repudiated Maduro's second term
January 11, 2019	The National Assembly declares Juan Guaido as the interim President of Venezuela, citing the constitution as justification. Calls for mass demonstrations begin
January 23, 2019	Juan Guaido publicly declares himself Acting President of Venezuela following several days of mass protests. 23 countries, including, the United States and most Latin American countries back Guaido as president
January 24, 2019	Maduro cuts diplomatic ties with the United States. The governments of Russia, China, Turkey, Syria, Iran and Cuba declare support for Maduro. Mexico and Uruguay stay neutral.
January 27, 2019	The National Assembly declares a health humanitarian crisis following reports that 8 of 10 pharmacies lack supplies of basic medicine
January 28, 2019	Sanctions from the United States are announced against the Venezuelan state oil company
February 2, 2019	Guaido starts leading nationwide demonstrations to allow international aid into Venezuela
February 4, 2019	Maduro sends 100 tons of aid to Cuba, defying call to allow aid
February 6, 2019	The Venezuelan National Guard blocks a bridge on the Colombian-Venezuelan border ahead of the arrival of aid
February 8, 2019	Humanitarian aid from the U.S. arrives at the Venezuelan border with Colombia that was blocked by Maduro
February 12, 2019	Juan Guaido declares an 11-day ultimatum for the Maduro government to allow aid into Venezuela
February 23, 2019	Aid trucks fail to enter Venezuela from Colombia and Brazil. Clashes between protestors, Maduro supporters, and Venezuelan authorities begin, injuring 285, resulting in more than four deaths

February 25, 2019	The Lima Group meets to discuss stalled aid. United States of America declares new sanctions of Venezuela and \$56 million in new aid for Venezuela's neighbours
March 7, 2019	A major power outage strikes Venezuela, affecting 15 of the 23 states and the countries capital city
April 1, 2019	Maduro announces power rationing in response to the major power outages. This would be in place for 30 days

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Constitution of the International Refugee Organization, December 15, 1946
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, July 28, 1951
- Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, September 28, 1954
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, January 31, 1967

## Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

July 2019, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights published a report documenting state violence against civilians, which has included torture and extrajudicial killings.

September 9, the High Commissioner criticized the Maduro government for failing to implement the report's recommendations.

The 2019 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela had a budget of \$738 million to provide emergency assistance to Venezuelans in the country, and improve social and cultural integration amongst Venezuelans who had fled the country. Moreover, additional funding would be granted to governments of countries hosting substantial populations of Venezuelan refugees.

## Possible Solutions

We can observe that the bad deployment of policies have played an important role in the economic crisis. There is a need to restart the economy and channel foreign investments in the country. It can be achieved by being a crypto friendly country. Building of a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) will encourage a steady flow of investments. It is an incentive for foreign companies to shop in the region, and promote trade and job creation a. In 2018, there was a rise of Petro cryptocurrency in the country, in an attempt to bypass US sanctions and keep the economy afloat. The most effective market strategy is to enable extensive promotion of Petro both on a national and international level.

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## Appendix or Appendices

- I. <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/venezuela/> (Venezuela Humanitarian Crisis)  
*This website provides a portal to various articles and statistics in relation to Venezuelas humanitarian crisis*
- II. <https://www.who.int/hac/about/reliefweb-aug2008.pdf> (Glossary of Humanitarian Terms)  
*A comprehensive list of terms useful for understanding terms relating to humanitarian crises*
- III. [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx?clang=\\_en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx?clang=_en) (United Nations Treaty Collection)  
*An archive of treaties dating back to the beginning of the United Nations. Chapters IV and V would be invaluable to understanding issues relating to Third Committees.*