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Venezuela

# Negotiations in Mexico between the Venezuelan government and the right-wing opposition

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**From 3-6 September the second round of negotiations will be held in Mexico between the government of Nicolás Maduro and the majority of the bourgeois opposition of the radical ultra-right, now identified as the Plataforma Unitaria de Venezuela (PUV), led partly by Juan Guaidó and Leopoldo López and partly by Henrique Capriles Radonsky.**

The negotiations - behind closed doors - began on 13-16 August with the mediation of Norway and the support of Russia and the Netherlands.

LUCHAS wants to establish a position on this process to contribute to the necessary debate with all workers, peasants, community members, youth, women's movements and also with all those who claim to be on the left inside and outside our borders. We previously stated that our organization is in favour of negotiations or agreements, however, in this statement we set out on what bases and conditions:

First, it must be made clear that the Maduro government is not negotiating with organizations with minor political differences, but with declared and proven enemies of national sovereignty and of the interests of workers and the Venezuelan people.

These opposition sectors have been recurrent protagonists of conspiracies, violent actions, armed raids, assassination attempts and attacks, supporting political, diplomatic and economic aggression and even mercenary incursions directed against our nation from the imperialist powers, as well as being accomplices of the brutal blockade against the Venezuelan people and the theft of their resources abroad, and have permanently called for military intervention in the country. All this in order to crush the Bolivarian revolutionary process and finally destroy the conquests obtained by the Venezuelan people since Chávez came to power as president and to once more push back for decades the desires for social justice and national independence.

The desire of the right-wing opposition is the attempt to impose by force and coercion a "parallel government" presided over by them, like that which was self-proclaimed in a public square in 2018, with the intention of inflicting a historic defeat on the Bolivarians, even with the physical annihilation of Chavistas who dare to respond. This government would be a faithful instrument to transform Venezuela into a shameful Yankee colony. Their political objectives were not achieved but the economic damage to the Nation and to the pockets and tables of Venezuelan working families has been enormous; with the imperialist economic sanctions they promoted, with the delivery of state assets (Monomers, Citgo, Venezuelan gold from the Bank of England and so on) and seasoned with shameless corruption.

This process of dialogue takes place at a key moment, marked by the political defeat of the imperialist plan to crush the Bolivarian Revolution, embodied in the interventionist "parallel government" supposedly headed by Juan Guaidó.

The defeat of this plan did not result from a single act. It is the result of a cascade of defeats that includes: the "Battle of the Bridges" on the Colombian-Venezuelan border in January 2019; the failed coup d'état of April 30 that same year which received a massive popular mobilization of response the next day; the defeat of the mercenary invasion by the organized communities and the Bolivarian militia of the Costas de Aragua; the electoral defeat suffered by the right in the last elections in the National Assembly; the defeat of the mercenary incursion in Apure in May-June 2021, and the defeat of the attempted violent paramilitary uprising that took place in the southwest of Caracas.

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The basis of this defeat of the imperialist plan is the stubborn resistance of broad sectors of Venezuelan women, the determined commitment of the Communes and behind these popular sectors as a firm rear-guard, Venezuelan working people who reject and isolate every conspiracy carried out by this bourgeoisie, which has demonstrated for two decades its intention to submit to overexploitation, to oppression, racism, humiliation and the most savage repression every attempt at justice and liberation of the working and popular classes.

It is a triumph of resistance based on the experience of struggle, on independent popular organization. It is a triumph based on the relationship of forces between the classes: although worn out and exhausted, the working class persists and inflicts defeats on its historical and concrete enemy.

We do not fight this battle alone. This triumph over the imperialist plan had the unforeseen and coincident help of the tremendous popular rebellions that recently shook the US and Colombia; the headquarters and operations command of the counterrevolution against Venezuela. Also, with the support of the popular rebellions that occurred and continue to happen in Chile, Peru, Guatemala, Bolivia and other countries of the Continent. This has shattered the "Lima Group", a kind of interventionist club of counterrevolutionary presidents at the service of Yankee imperialism against the peoples of America and has also undermined the OAS and Almagro himself.

We repeat, it has been a difficult and costly triumph because the enemy has devastated our economy from within, with speculation and hyperinflation, and from outside with economic blockade; also enhancing its consequences with growing state corruption and added to this in the last two years the terrible effects of the covid-19 pandemic. All these elements have been combined and produced paralysis of industrial production and in particular the oil industry, hunger, unemployment, crisis in health, education, public services, among others. In addition, millions of Venezuelans, mostly young people, have emigrated and fled the country in search of other horizons and opportunities, taking a whole wealth of knowledge and experience acquired in our country, and today they are scattered around the world, often suffering abuse, xenophobia, discrimination, mistreatment and even being victims of murders.

The fact that the local bourgeoisie and its organizations are politically defeated has forced it to recognize the government that the people elected, and the implicit acceptance shown so far by imperialism also ratifies this.

Faced with the current negotiations, the Chavista bases show a mixture of expectations and distrust. No one likes secrecy, especially given what is at stake and our own interests. Less pleasing is the discourse and actions that show intent to maintain impunity for bourgeois terrorists; as evidenced by the unconsented liberation of the renowned Freddy "marihuanita" Guevara, and the offer of political freedoms for all conspiratorial bourgeois organizations and characters. The government gives political oxygen to a bourgeoisie that now suffers from the symptoms of Covid 19.

So, we do share those apprehensions of the Chavista popular bases. In addition, it inflames us and for this reason we denounce the fact that the government, while making all kinds of previous concessions to the bourgeoisie and its older *guarimberos*, continues to unjustly and inhumanely keep workers' leaders such as Eudis Giro, Sabariego (PDVSA) and others and others in prisons or jail houses, an example being two young PDVSA workers, Aryenis Torrealba and Alfredo Chirinos and ignore the requests for special care for some of these fellow prisoners in situations of illness, such as Rodney Álvarez, a ferro-mining worker who has spent more than 10 years in prison.

That is why we warn: The negotiating table cannot agree in secret, what the workers, peasants, women, community members, youth, pensioners and retirees, have defended and conquered with order and popular organization in the midst of the hardships of this crisis.

Can there be negotiations? Yes, and there must be negotiations. Negotiating from our popular victory to move

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forward. The conspiratorial bourgeoisie must be led to an Agreement of Peace with Justice, which consolidates the defeat that we have dealt to the enemy through all these years. The negotiations must serve to consolidate peace, to dismantle speculation, to liquidate any internal support for the imperialist policy of sanctions so that they weaken and can fall.

Contrary to this, what we are observing for now, is the PSUV government using this triumph as a currency of exchange in its plans to establish an inclusive regime of capitalist exploitation (inclusive for the bureaucracy with the desire of a bourgeoisie) in exchange for impunity and freedom for all the openly counterrevolutionary actors of the bourgeoisie.

The surrender of Maduro and his "loyalists" lies not in the fact of negotiating, but in the elements of economic surrender, subordination to transnational and national capital, extreme labour flexibility and impunity for bourgeois terrorists and political persecution of workers who struggle, this is what is marking these negotiations.

Thus, the current negotiation not only wastes, but clearly threatens to betray that costly popular triumph.

LUCHAS calls on all workers; organizations, communes, organizations and intellectuals of the left, social movements of women and peasants to pronounce themselves in favour of a negotiation that is based on the defeat that we have inflicted on the fraudulent "parallel government" to advance in the resolution of the needs of the heroic working people in their resistance:

i) To allow a reconstruction of the national economy for the benefit of those of us who have fought and resisted and not in favour of bourgeois and bureaucratic waste in casinos and window displays;

(ii) To achieve a peace that decides on the indexation of wages, the stabilization of a national currency that is not subordinate to the dollar, the defence and expansion of the communal economy and the rescue of collective labour agreements;

ii) To strengthen democratic freedoms for workers, peasants, community members and social fighters, instead of them being tried and imprisoned.

We do not deny that, under the current conditions, the bourgeoisie should have room for certain economic activities, especially the small and medium-sized food producers in the countryside. But let this not be done with starvation wages, without labour rights and with loss of national sovereignty. On the contrary, the more space it is necessary to give the bourgeois economy, the more democratic control the communal workers' and people's organizations must exercise.

We have defeated a new onslaught of imperialism and the criminal right through worker, peasant, communal and popular resistance. From there we must begin to rebuild our economy. We will see if the government representatives take into account this balance sheet, considerations and proposals.

*National Secretariat of LUCHAS.*

*Venezuela, 23 August 2021.*

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