



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

148th IPU Assembly

Geneva, 23–27 March 2024

Assembly
Item 2

A/148/2-P.5-rev.2
24 March 2024

Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 148th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of Argentina, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Guyana, Peru and Uruguay

On 24 March 2024, the IPU Secretary General received from the delegation of Argentina, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Guyana, Peru and Uruguay a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 148th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

“Free, fair and transparent elections without prohibitions: Towards an orderly and peaceful democratic transition in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela”.

Delegates to the 148th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request ([Annex I](#)), as well as an explanatory memorandum ([Annex II](#)) and a draft resolution ([Annex III](#)) in support thereof.

The 148th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegations of Argentina, on behalf of the delegation of Argentina, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Guyana, Peru and Uruguay on Sunday, 24 March 2024.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution, which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The IPU Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted.
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted.
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject.
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.

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#IPU148

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE IPU SECRETARY GENERAL BY LUCILA CREXELL,
PRESIDENT OF THE ARGENTINIAN DELEGATION GROUP OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
UNION, ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF ARGENTINA,
GUYANA, PERU AND URUGUAY**

24 March 2024

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The Argentine Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Ecuador and Peru, intends to propose the following emergency item for inclusion in the agenda of the 148th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) scheduled for 23-27 March 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland:

“Free, fair and transparent elections without prohibitions: Towards an orderly and peaceful democratic transition in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela”.

The draft resolution, along with the explanatory memorandum, is attached with the request that the IPU Secretariat may circulate these documents to all delegations participating in the work of the Assembly under the Statutes and Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Lucila CREXELL
National Senator, Argentina

**FREE, FAIR AND TRANSPARENT ELECTIONS WITHOUT PROHIBITIONS: TOWARDS
AN ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION
IN THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA**

***Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Argentina,
on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Guyana, Peru and Uruguay***

The political, economic and social crisis that has been brewing in Venezuela over the last twenty years has caused the largest humanitarian crisis on the planet, affecting almost eight million people, a quarter of the total population of that country.

After several attempts to find a solution by different actors in the international community, mediating the role of facilitator on the part of Norway and the support of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, the United States of America, the United Mexican States, the Russian Federation, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on October 17, 2023, the Government of Venezuela, in power of Nicolás Maduro, and the Democratic Unitary Platform of Venezuela, the main opposition political alliance, reached the so-called "Barbados Agreement", aimed at the recognition and respect of the right of each political actor to select its candidate for the presidential elections freely and in accordance with its internal mechanisms (first clause).

The Democratic Unitary Platform held its primary elections on October 22, 2023, with María Corina Machado, a Venezuelan parliamentarian known by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, being legitimately the winner.

The regime of Nicolás Maduro chose to ban María Corina Machado through illegitimate and illegal institutional manipulation manoeuvres typical of a dictatorial regime, attempting to leave the opposition without its best candidate, elected at the polls by millions of Venezuelans, a large majority that surpassed ninety percent of the voters with respect to the nine remaining candidates, who together shared less than ten percent of the votes.

The situation is logically unacceptable and a clear violation not only of the Barbados Agreement but also of international standards associated with respect for the rule of law, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The ban occurred immediately before the call for presidential elections on July 28, 2024, and was subsequently illegally and illegitimately ratified, while, in parallel, the government has advanced in arbitrary detections, incommunicado detentions, threats and all types of crimes and violation of international conventions.

For this reason, it is proposed that the 148th Assembly of the Interparliamentary Union, meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, between March 23 and 27, 2024, approve an emergency resolution through which the holding of free, fair, transparent elections without proscriptions is promoted, aspiring to achieve a democratic, orderly and peaceful transition in Venezuela.

**FREE, FAIR AND TRANSPARENT ELECTIONS WITHOUT PROHIBITIONS: TOWARDS
AN ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION
IN THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA**

***Draft resolution presented by the delegation of Argentina, on behalf of
the delegations of Argentina, Guyana, Peru and Uruguay***

The 148th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) Affirms that, in its capacity as an international organization of the Parliaments of sovereign States and center of interparliamentary consultation on a global scale since 1889, it works in favor of peace and cooperation between peoples and for the consolidation of representative institutions, having among its purposes to examine issues of international interest and pronounce on them in order to provoke action by Parliaments and their members (Arts. 1 and 2, paragraph b) of its Statutes);
- (2) Recognizes that the IPU contributes with its actions to the defense and promotion of human rights, which have universal scope and whose respect is an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development (Art. 2, paragraph c) of its Statutes);
- (3) Highlights that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has long been immersed in a social, economic and political crisis that has become a humanitarian crisis, with more than 7.7 million Venezuelans having emigrated to date as refugees, asylees or migrants in search of new destinations where they can live and develop, more than a quarter of the country's total population;
- (4) Warns that according to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), of the total number of Venezuelan refugees or migrants worldwide, eighty-four percent are in the Latin American and Caribbean region, most requiring international protection, making it the largest forced international displacement crisis in the world, including humanitarian crises affecting millions of Syrians, Ukrainians, Afghans and Gazans;
- (5) Notes that, in September 2019, the United Nations Human Rights Council created by Resolution No. 42/25 an Independent International Mission to determine alleged human rights violations committed by the government of Venezuela since 2014, mission that was successively extended by resolutions No. 45/20 and 51/29 until September 2024;
- (6) Remember that in the month of August 2021, an IPU delegation led by its then President, Duarte Pacheco, and made up of parliamentarians from around the world, visited Venezuela in order to consult with interested parties in an attempt to assess the overall political situation in the country, as well as to find satisfactory solutions to cases monitored by the IPU Parliamentarians' Human Rights Committee;
- (7) Underlines that one hundred and forty-one cases of violations of the human rights of parliamentarians in Venezuela are currently being processed by the IPU, having been adopted unanimously during the 211th Session of the Governing Council held in Manama, Bahrain, during the 146th Assembly in March 2023, the decision to reaffirm the IPU's long-standing position that the continued harassment of opposition parliamentarians elected in 2015, despite the expiration of their mandate, is a direct consequence of the prominent role they played as open opponents of the Government of President Nicolás Maduro and as members of the then opposition (point 2);
- (8) Reiterates that the issues raised within the IPU Parliamentarians' Human Rights Committee linked to Venezuela can only be resolved through inclusive political dialogue, reaffirming the IPU's willingness to support any efforts to strengthen democracy in Venezuela (211th Session of the Governing Council of the UIP, point 3);
- (9) Repeats that as stated in the IPU Universal Declaration on Democracy, the “key element in the exercise of democracy is the holding of free and fair elections... that allow the will of the people to be expressed... on the basis of universal and equal rights”, secret suffrage so that all

voters can elect their representatives in conditions of equality, openness and transparency, expressing hope that the results of the ongoing dialogue will also contribute to ensuring that opposition candidates, including all former opposition parliamentarians who have been banned from holding public office and their supporters, are able to exercise their basic human right to participate in the conduct of public affairs alongside the ruling party and its supporters” (211th Session of the UIP Governing Council, point 4);

(10) Shows that although the agreements signed in Bridgetown, Barbados, on October 17, 2023 between representatives of the Venezuelan government and opposition parties generated hope, recent events once again raise doubts about the feasibility of holding free, fair, transparent elections without proscriptions, condemning to failure the possibility of achieving an orderly and peaceful democratic transition;

(11) Remembers that the so-called “Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All”, inspired by the commitment of both signatory parties “to the strengthening of an inclusive democracy and a culture of tolerance and political coexistence”, expresses recognizing and respecting “the right of each political actor to select its candidate for the presidential elections freely and in accordance with its internal mechanisms” (first clause of the agreement); the presidential electoral process must be carried out “in the second half of 2024, in accordance with the constitutional schedule” (second clause of the agreement);

(12) Highlights that the aforementioned agreement included a request to agreed technical electoral observation missions, including the European Union, the UN Panel of Electoral Experts, the African Union, the Inter-American Union of Electoral Organizations and the Carter Center, “for the purposes of observing the presidential electoral process, with strict adherence to the Constitution, the law and the agreements signed by the Electoral Branch, without prejudice to the right of political actors to invite national and international companions, within the framework of the law (fourth clause of the agreement);

(13) Points out that, among other guarantees, the agreement encourages the Parties to continue the process of dialogue and negotiation in relation to other measures aimed at strengthening an “inclusive democracy” and a “culture of tolerance and political coexistence”, as well as “respect to human rights” (clause six of the agreement);

(14) Recognizes that after the signing of the agreements, the actions of political persecution of opponents by the Venezuelan government increased, as well as violations of human rights, arbitrarily suspending the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Venezuela in mid-February 2024 by instructing its authorities and staff to leave the country within the next seventy-two hours;

(15) Warns that both the case of the arbitrary detention of Rocío San Miguel, a renowned human rights defender, and the political banning of María Corina Machado, and the murder of Ronald Ojeda, exiled and murdered in Chile, despite the fact that he had international political protection, constitute examples serious enough to attract the attention of the international parliamentary community;

(16) Remembers that Rocío San Miguel was arrested on February 9, 2024 at the Caracas international airport, and has since been in a state of defenselessness after remaining missing for almost a week; and María Corina Machado is being a victim of political proscription through the use of public institutions co-opted by the regime of President Nicolás Maduro, including the Superior Court of Justice (TSJ), which on January 26, 2024 decided to disqualify her; and to the National Electoral Council (CNE), which on March 11, 2024 issued a decision through which it is considered that the aforementioned “presents a prohibition to hold public office”;

(17) Considers the escalation of repression by the Venezuelan government and the attempts to ban the opposition unacceptable, especially when on October 22, 2023 the so-called Democratic Unitary Platform held its primary elections respecting the Barbados Agreement, with candidate María Corina Machado being the undisputed winner by millions of votes, who obtained more than ninety percent of the votes, dividing the remaining percentage among the other candidates;

(18) It is worrying that in this context the government of Venezuela has called presidential elections on March 5, 2024 through the National Electoral Council (CNE), to be held on July 28, 2024, while attempting to ban María Corina Machado, main opposition candidate; as well as the measures of all kinds that are being adopted to intimidate the opposition, including arbitrary arrests, threats and actions of all kinds that violate human rights;

(19) Clarifies the issue raised by the European Parliament Resolution of February 8, 2024 on “new acts of repression against democratic forces in Venezuela: attacks on presidential candidate María Corina Machado (2024/2549 RSP), which states that “The 2024 elections could mark a turning point from corrupt autocracy towards a return to democracy, if all points of the Barbados Agreement are respected; that civil and political rights continue to be violated in Venezuela, which has caused years of instability and violence; that around eight million people have been forced to leave the country” (preambular paragraph a) of the resolution);

(20) This resolution deepens the issue when it maintains that “there have been systematic restrictions on public information, freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly, particularly for dissidents of the regime, trade unionists, and human rights defenders and the most vulnerable members of society (preambular paragraph b) of the resolution); recalling that “in its Resolution, of July 13, 2023, on disqualifications in Venezuela, the European Parliament already strongly condemned the political disqualification of candidates by the Venezuelan regime”; that this Resolution specifically condemned the arbitrary and unconstitutional disqualification for fifteen years of María Corina Machado and other prominent political figures and regretted that the recommendations of the last EU EOM had been completely ignored (preambular paragraph i) of the resolution);

(21) Noting that on March 14, 2024, the European Parliament once again addressed the critical situation currently experienced in Venezuela, issuing a new resolution through which the case of Rocío San Miguel is remembered; the suspension of the activities of the OHCHR; the long political imprisonment of General Hernandez Da Costa; the arrest of the campaign coordinators of María Corina Machado, opposition candidate for the presidency of the regime; the murder of Ronald Ojeda; and the imprisonment of more than three hundred political prisoners in inhuman conditions;

(22) Taking into consideration the report on violations of human rights and especially political rights in Venezuela made orally by the Independent International Mission of the United Nations Human Rights Council on Venezuela on March 20 of this year in accordance with resolution 51 /29, including the period from September 2023 to that date, through which it is concluded that “the repressive structure of the State had not been dismantled and that it continued to represent a latent threat that could be activated when the Government deemed it necessary” , including two modalities, “A more violent one that is activated to silence the voices of the opposition at any price, even through the commission of crimes, and another that creates a climate of fear and intimidation that restricts the free exercise of fundamental rights ”;

(23) Considering that as the European Parliament Resolutions point out, “the electoral roadmap contained in the Barbados Agreement remains an opportunity to resolve the long-standing political, economic and humanitarian crises in Venezuela and hold competitive, free and inclusive elections in the country; that the persecution of opposition candidates to the regime seriously violates the political rights and electoral guarantees signed in the Barbados Agreement (preambular paragraph n) of the resolution of February 8, 2024);

(24) Aware that the situation in Venezuela has two decades of violations of human rights and the rules of international order, having created the biggest forced international displacement of migrants distributed all over the world, being considered a situation of international concern in need of urgent action by the international community;

(25) Convinced that the urgency is related to the need to ensure a democratic transition capable to avoid not just a mayor damage for the Venezuelan people living in their country and the forced migrants living abroad, but also the scalation of military actions at levels capable to generate severe consequences not just at regional level but also international.

1. Reiterates the role of the Interparliamentary Union and in particular of the Assembly, in promoting the defense of democracy throughout the world, in accordance with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Democracy adopted on the occasion of the 98th Conference held in Cario between September 11 and 16, 1997;
2. Emphatically condemns the formal disqualification of María Corina Machado, winner of the primary elections of the Democratic Unitary Platform of Venezuela for violating the "Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All" of October 17, 2023; of the spirit and letter of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; of international standards associated with respect for the rule of law, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women;
3. Expresses alarm at the actions of dictatorial political persecution by the Nicolás Maduro regime and the measures adopted by it that violate the civil and political rights of the people of Venezuela, putting at risk the possibility of achieving, through the holding of free, fair, transparent elections without proscriptions, an orderly and peaceful democratic transition in Venezuela;
4. Demands the cessation of actions of political persecution, including the immediate lifting of any impediment so that María Corina Machado and other opposition politicians can freely participate in the elections scheduled for July 28, 2024;
5. Calls on the UIP member parliaments and parliamentarians to include the issue in their institutional agendas, promoting interest in monitoring the elections, respect for human rights, and the reestablishment of democracy in Venezuela;
6. Urges IPU member parliaments and parliamentarians to listen to all parties involved in Venezuela, especially the victims of violations of human rights and political rights, their families, and civil society, engaging their governments to actively participate in the competent institutional spheres in the international order, including the Independent Mission of the United Nations Human Rights Council on Venezuela, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the World Organization for Migration, among other;
7. Requests the IPU member parliaments and parliamentarians to promote the evaluation of the situation, its monitoring and the adoption of measures aimed at the protection of human and political rights in Venezuela in the areas of parliamentary diplomacy, including bilateral relations with other parliaments or peer parliamentarians; regional and subregional international parliamentary institutions; as well as networks and other areas of interparliamentary exchange and cooperation;
8. Requires UIP member parliaments and parliamentarians to promote declarations in favor of the defense of human and political rights in Venezuela and the express request for free, fair, transparent elections without proscriptions, in such a way that they allow a democratic transition, orderly and peaceful in Venezuela;
9. Promotes the participation and support of parliamentarians and representatives of civil society from around the world during the holding of the presidential elections in Venezuela called for July 28, 2024, including a special delegation from the Interparliamentary Union;
10. Recommends that the Assembly and the Governing Council continue to actively deal with the issue, together with the Presidency, the Executive Committee, and the General Secretariat, evaluating the possibility of urgently creating a Working Group on the presidential elections in Venezuela similar to the one created regarding the situation in Ukraine;

11. Requests the Human Rights Commission of Parliamentarians of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to update the cases of violations of the human rights of parliamentarians, including specifically and especially the banning of María Corina Machado and the persecution of people around her;
12. Takes note of the decision of the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court of March 1, 2024, through which the authorization is confirmed for the Prosecutor's Office to resume the investigation into crimes against humanity in Venezuela and resolves to provide for the follow-up of the case;
13. Promotes the follow-up to the statements of the participating countries of the 55th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council held in Geneva, Switzerland, in particular the interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral update on the human rights situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and with the Independent Mission of the United Nations Human Rights Council on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; and finally,
14. Calls upon the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to cooperate fully with universal and regional human rights mechanisms, avoiding not just a mayor damage for the Venezuelan people living in their country and the forced migrants living abroad, but also the scalation of military actions at levels capable to generate severe consequences not just at regional level but also international.