

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 9, 2014

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

We urge you to lead a diplomatic effort at the United Nations to deny Venezuela a seat on the U.N. Security Council.

In addition to President Maduro's vocal disdain for the United Nations, his government's actions, at the U.N. and at home, run counter to the founding principles and norms of the U.N. Charter, namely the pursuit of international peace and security and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people. Venezuela's presence on the U.N. Security Council would constitute a serious blow for the United States and the United Nations at a time when we must collaborate to address the world's most pressing challenges.

At the United Nations, the Maduro Administration has collaborated with a fringe group of autocratic governments on the most critical issues of our era. In 2013, Venezuela joined ranks with Belarus, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria and Zimbabwe to oppose the U.N. General Assembly's denunciation of acts of violence committed by the Syrian government against its own people. Earlier this year, Venezuela once again aligned itself with the same bloc to vote against the U.N. General Assembly's condemnation of Russia's annexation of Crimea.

In our own hemisphere, the Maduro Administration is deliberately working to undermine the democratic commitments of the Organization of American States and debilitate the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Moreover, since February of this year, President Maduro's security forces systematically have sought to silence peaceful protests across the country, resulting in more than 40 deaths, more than 2,200 unlawful arrests, and at least 50 documented cases of torture.

In closing, we appeal to you to undertake a broad based diplomatic campaign to prevent Venezuela from assuming a seat on the U.N. Security Council.

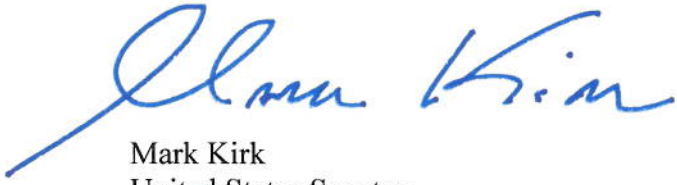
Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Richard Durbin
United States Senator



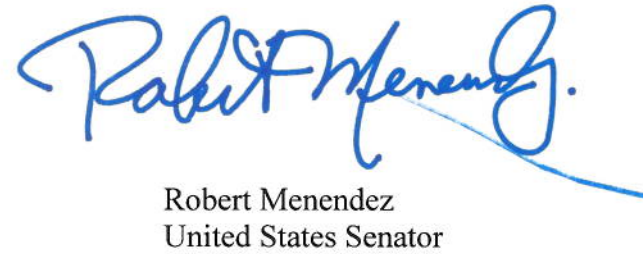
Mark Kirk
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



John McCain
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator

Cc: Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations