

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

September 29, 2020

His Excellency António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
405 East 42nd Street
New York, NY, 10017

Dear Secretary-General Guterres:

We write in regards to the continued erosion of democratic norms and institutions in Venezuela. Since 2013, the people of Venezuela have been forced to live under the brutality of dictator Nicolás Maduro. The regime continues to violate Venezuelans' fundamental rights, including their right to freely elect their leaders. We urge you to support the Venezuelan people in their struggle for a return to democratic order and reject Maduro's attempts to hold elections this December in a manner that is not transparent, free, or fair.

As you are well aware, Venezuela was once a prosperous and stable democracy, and one of Latin America's fastest growing economies. However, Maduro's regime has brought economic catastrophe to the country and created a massive migration crisis that threatens to destabilize the region. He has financed his regime with stolen gold and other illicit activities, and has committed egregious human rights violations. These violations include arresting opposition leaders, jailing journalists, weaponizing food, torturing opponents, and committing extrajudicial killings. Venezuelans lack access to basic nutrition, medicine, and social services. Hyperinflation and corruption have only added to the dire humanitarian crisis. The UN Independent International Fact Finding Mission for Venezuela released a report on September 16 which confirmed that the Maduro regime's actions "amount to crimes against humanity."

We hope that you will use your position as Secretary General to fully support and stand with the Venezuelan people and their right to a free and fair election. Maduro's goal is to retain his grip on power and to continue to use Venezuela as a transit point for illicit crime that serves to enrich himself and the corrupt people around him. We must work together to demand transparent, free, and fair elections, the release of all political prisoners, and the reestablishment of an independent National Electoral Council with all political parties and their directors reinstated.

It is our hope that you will reject and condemn elections that are not free and fair, and that you will support the Venezuelan people's fundamental right to take control of their own future.

We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
U.S. Senator