

An Open Letter to the Acting President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez

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Dear Ms. Rodríguez,

You took the helm of Venezuela at the most shocking moment in its modern history. When American helicopters whisked Nicolás Maduro away on that January night, it seemed the "Bolivarian experiment" was over for good. Yet, you did not flee. You demonstrated steely political will, took the reins of power, and saved the country from an immediate slide into civil war or total chaos.

However, let us face the truth. Your initial moves are a classic example of "adaptive authoritarianism." You made pragmatic—almost cynical—concessions to Washington: you hastily passed a law handing oil extraction and sales over to private and American corporations, struck a 50-million-barrel deal with the White House, extradited Alex Saab to the U.S., and opened the door for visits to Caracas by the CIA Director and the U.S. Secretary of Energy. You traded Venezuela's natural resources for the lifting of sanctions and your own political survival.

Trump has declared that Washington "runs Venezuela and its oil," while on domestic

television you continue to speak of "defending the Bolivarian Revolution against Zionist and imperialist plots." This double standard cannot last forever.

Cosmetic reforms and oil trading are not enough. Venezuela demands the systemic dismantling of the dictatorship, not merely a change of facade:

The release of all political prisoners without exception: Yes, as part of an amnesty, you released over 600 people—journalists, human rights activists, and opposition members. This helped you halt a second wave of American strikes. Yet hundreds of people remain behind bars, and those released face strict judicial restrictions: they are barred from speaking to the press and forbidden from leaving the country. A genuine amnesty imposes no conditions and does not hold hostages for future bargaining.

A real return to the rule of law: Your courts, the prosecutor's office, and the electoral council (CNE) remain packed with loyalist Chavistas. Laws punishing "defamation" and "hate speech," as well as those restricting the work of independent NGOs, remain in force. You cannot build a stable economy if the law changes at the snap of a finger from Miraflores Palace or a phone call from Washington. Investors need independent courts, while citizens need protection from the arbitrary violence of armed *colectivos* groups.

Free elections involving the genuine opposition: The U.S. formally recognized your administration in March 2026 to ensure a stable flow of oil amidst global turmoil. Yet millions of Venezuelans at home—and millions of refugees abroad—did not choose you. The political disqualification of opposition leaders (such as María Corina Machado) must be overturned. The country needs a legitimate government elected through a transparent vote monitored by international observers.

Saving people from destitution: Inflation in Venezuela remains at a catastrophic 60%, and the gap between the Central Bank's official exchange rate and the black-market dollar rate reaches 50%. The American petrodollars now flowing into Caracas must not end up in the pockets of a new generation of officials; they must be used to rebuild shattered infrastructure, healthcare systems, and energy grids. Ms. Rodríguez, you have made history as Venezuela's first female president—albeit an acting one. Yet now, you face a choice. You can be remembered by the people as a mere interim

administrator who simply repackaged Maduro's authoritarian regime to meet U.S. economic demands in order to cling to personal power. Alternatively, you can demonstrate true statesmanship and become the Venezuelan Adolfo Suárez—a figure who, emerging from the heart of a dictatorship, found the courage to return power to the people and oversee a peaceful, controlled transition to genuine democracy.

Venezuela is fed up with slogans, sanctions, and destitution. It needs freedom and bread. Give it that freedom.

Hoping for a peaceful transition and the country's true revival,

A Citizen of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

P.S. Current status: Acting. President Delcy Rodríguez

Analysis of leadership effectiveness in the current landscape (on a scale of 1 to 5):

Control over the power vertical: 4.2 (Managed to keep the military and state apparatus under control following Maduro's shock arrest; relies on her brother, Jorge Rodríguez, in the National Assembly, yet risks a clash with hardline Chavistas)

Crisis management and economic adaptation: 4.5 (Acts with lightning speed: radically overhauled oil legislation, opened the sector to the US, mitigated sanctions pressure, and secured an influx of foreign currency)

Foreign policy stability: 3.5 (Executed an incredible pivot: shifted from total isolation to direct negotiations with the CIA and the US Department of Energy and is rebuilding ties, though her legitimacy in the eyes of the EU and Latin America remains in question)

Social consolidation: 2.1 (Society is disoriented and fractured; a cosmetic amnesty has not erased years of repression, and the opposition and civil society demand a full regime change rather than a mere facade)

Current verdict: 3.58 / A master of authoritarian survival. Delcy Rodríguez achieved the impossible: she preserved the regime's framework after its leader was literally

abducted from his residence. She demonstrated phenomenal flexibility by striking a deal with Trump based on an "oil-for-recognition" formula. However, her primary vulnerability is a total lack of domestic legitimacy. Venezuela is in a state of fragile truce, and if Rodríguez attempts to freeze the transition of power, the country will inevitably face a new social explosion.

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