



New anti-democratic maneuver: Against the consolidation of an authoritarian regime in Venezuela

The bourgeois pole in power — which has its political representative in the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) — has committed a grotesque coup against democracy with the aim of staying in Government and continuing with the economic plundering of the country.

On the night of Sunday, July 28, the National Electoral Council (CNE) began this gigantic swindle against the popular will expressed in the ballot boxes, presenting a bulletin of preliminary results loaded with legal and mathematical inconsistencies to the country, which alerted the entire population about the possibility of an electoral fraud.

In the first place, and as denounced by our presidential candidate, Enrique Marquez —by first hand information transmitted by his party political witnesses accredited before the CNE— the first bulletin read by Rector Elvis Amoroso was not printed in the central tallying room. This element sows insurmountable doubts on the veracity of the content of the first bulletin, since it did not come from the tallying room —as it corresponds according to the law— it is not a guarantee of being a reliable expression of the vote count.

Secondly, Rector Elvis Amoroso assured that this bulletin expressed an "irreversible tendency" of the results with 80% of the tally sheets transmitted. Amoroso reported a participation rate of 59% out of a total of 21,392,464 voters eligible to vote. Candidate Maduro reportedly obtained 5,150,092 votes (51.02%) while candidate Edmundo González Urrutia obtained 4,445,978 votes (44.02%). The Rector indicated, without giving details, that the other candidates received 462,704 votes (4.6%). That is to say, Rector Amoroso declared the "irreversibility" of the electoral trend in favor of candidate Nicolás Maduro with an advantage of only 704,114 votes against the second most voted candidate; however, more than 2,562,779 votes were still to be counted, three times the difference between the first and the second candidate.

The following day, Monday, July 29, doubts about the transparency of the process increased due to the fact that the CNE, instead of making public the second electoral bulletin, with the vote broken down by voting center and polling stations —as established by the electoral law and as is customary in all electoral



processes in Venezuela—, hurriedly proceeded to formally proclaim the victory of candidate Nicolás Maduro, while more than two and a half million votes yet to be counted.

In Venezuela, voting is electronic. At the end of the voting day, the machines print a record of the votes cast at each voting booth, which is signed by CNE officials and party witnesses. Copies of these receipts are given to the electoral witnesses of each political party participating in the contest. This guarantees that the information handled by the CNE and each political organization is the same, providing transparency to the process.

The crisis worsened after that same day, the campaign command of Edmundo González Urrutia made public the results of 70% of the electoral records systematized by his party political witnesses in the more than 30,000 electoral centers in the country, while the national electoral body showed its incapacity to present the records that supported the first bulletin, under the allegation of an alleged "cybernetic attack". As if this were not enough, the machine receipts presented by the opposition campaign command—which still today have not been denied by the Electoral Power— show a result in which González Urrutia recorded a considerable electoral advantage over the candidate Nicolás Maduro.

Without venturing to take for certain the results presented by the main opposition force of the country—although they coincide with the high rejection that the Venezuelan people manifest against the anti-worker and anti-popular management of Nicolás Maduro—, the truth is that the failure to present the electoral receipts and data by voting center and booth within 72 hours after the first announcement is an unprecedented event in the history of the electoral processes of the last 25 years in Venezuela.

The fact that the PSUV has not made any effort to refute the allegations of the opposition or publicly present copies of the minutes of its witnesses, and that President Nicolás Maduro himself has claimed to be in possession of 100% of the receipts, accentuates the distrust on the results presented. There is already a precedent in the 2013 presidential elections, when the opposition denounced fraud and the PSUV, in order to dispel doubts, published in its web page the minutes in its possession to confirm its victory. Now, the head of the PSUV campaign command has remained silent and hides the copies of its electoral receipts.



We want to make it clear that a "cybernetic attack" is not a sufficient reason to justify the silence that the CNE has maintained for more than 72 hours to present the tally sheets and complete the scrutiny of 100% of the votes. The Venezuelan electoral system has emergency mechanisms to guarantee the fulfillment of its functions. For example, in the event that the total transmission of the results is impossible, copies of the tally sheets received by the witnesses of the political parties are made available, the originals of which are under the custody of the military forces. As such, today, not only is the impartiality of the electoral body in doubt, but as every moment passes, a fact that in the streets of the country seems indisputable is emerging with greater clarity: Nicolás Maduro lost the elections and an institutional conspiracy is developing to ignore and truncate the popular will expressed in the ballot box.

As you can see, there are reasonable doubts to question the result presented by Rector Elvis Amoroso. Political organizations and the Venezuelan people have the full right to demand compliance with the provisions of Venezuelan electoral law.

This simple demand for electoral transparency, in accordance with Venezuelan rule of law, has been turned by the authoritarian government of Maduro into an alleged coup d'état against him. Instead of demanding that the CNE comply with its duty to present the electoral receipts and results by voting center—to clear the reasonable doubts that exist—it violently lashes out against the spontaneous popular protests that are taking place throughout the country and that have had their epicenter in popular sectors.

A wave of persecution has been unleashed against electoral booth party political witnesses, journalists and passers-by, who are detained by security forces to neutralize the citizen protest.

The Government intends to evade the legitimate claims of the Venezuelan people with a grotesque campaign of criminalization of social protests. Resorting to the most implausible narratives, they intend to accuse anyone who demands transparency in the process of being involved in a "fascist", "terrorist", "pro-imperialist" offensive, and so on and so forth.

The exercise of an excessive use of force by the repressive forces and the brutal use of para-police groups against an unarmed population, has already claimed



the lives of 13 citizens and the detention of thousands of people, among them teenagers.

In no way do we justify the excesses of those demonstrators who—responding to the guidelines of extremist groups— have committed crimes of destruction of public property and attacks against people because of their political ideology. However, in a responsible manner we must make it clear that this behavior has not been the generality. The vast majority of demonstrations have been spontaneous and peaceful, as a social reaction to the ongoing anti-democratic maneuver.

From the Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV) we demand that the Venezuelan government cease the criminalization of popular protests and immediately stop the machinery of repression and persecution against young and innocent people. To protest is a legitimate right of the Venezuelan people that the PSUV-Government intends to trample on with manipulations and lies.

A few hours ago, the authoritarian Government of Nicolás Maduro adopted the unusual and unconstitutional decision of going to the Electoral Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice for a ruling on electoral results that are still unknown. Undoubtedly, this is a legal maneuver to distract from the responsibility of the CNE and to prevent the population from playing a controlling role in the verification of the results. Maduro intends to confine the discussion to the closed walls of a court that he manages at his whim, with the flawed purpose of seeking legitimacy.

Dear comrades, the political situation in Venezuela is very dangerous. Already previously, with the persecution of our party, the cases of criminalization of the workers struggles and with the multiple maneuvers to which we were subjected to infringe upon our democratic rights, we demonstrated to you that there is a deepening of the authoritarian features of this Government that represents the interests of the bourgeoisie expressed in the PSUV. What is happening with the presidential elections of July 28, confirms to us that the Government of Nicolás Maduro is crossing the line of no return and is marching vertiginously towards the imposition of a reactionary regime.

The dark forces of bourgeois reaction and the propaganda laboratories of the Government-PSUV are trying to delegitimize the opinion of the PCV, assuring that there is an alleged alliance of our party with political forces of the traditional right wing and even with imperialism. In this regard, we want to ratify that our



party has no alliance with any bourgeois pole responsible for the dispossession of the working class and the deep crisis in which the country is immersed.

Our party maintains a policy consistent with what was approved by its 16th National Congress, which raises the need to build an alternative from the workers and popular camp to the two poles of the bourgeoisie. We tried to present in these presidential elections a candidacy that would be an expression of this necessary process of accumulation of forces of the worker-popular camp, but the government of Nicolás Maduro, making an authoritarian use of its institutional power, prevented it. Finally, we built an alliance with the independent candidate Enrique Marquez, based on a government program that had at its core the recovery of the rights that have been taken away from working families.

The PCV does not build its policy on the basis of ideological blackmail, but in the light of the immediate and strategic interests of the Venezuelan working class as a whole. Those who pretend that the PCV should remain silent in the face of the ongoing farce, only because this line of denunciation could "benefit" the candidate of the hegemonic forces of the opposition, are mistaken. If we allow this fraud to advance and consolidate, it is the working class who will bear the greatest consequences, not the parties of the bourgeoisie, since, as class analysis shows, these organizations at the service of capital will end up making pacts according to their economic interests.

We have no doubt that the consolidation of the authoritarian turn of the regime of Nicolás Maduro and the PSUV will translate into the destruction of the little that remains of political and democratic freedoms of the working people, as well as it will negatively impact on the trade union and trade union freedoms of the workers to wage the class struggle against the bosses.

We urge the international communist movement not to turn its back on the Venezuelan working class. A campaign is underway to legitimize a clearly flawed process, based on the repeated discourse of the alleged "anti-imperialist struggle" of the PSUV-Government. However, the actions of that corrupt leadership confirm its servile disposition to guarantee the profits of the local bourgeoisie and transnational capital, while it unloads all the weight of the crisis and the consequences of the criminal "sanctions" on the shoulders of the working class.

From the PCV, we reiterate our demand to the CNE that it publish the tally sheets and the results by polling station and voting center. Also, to allow an integral



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audit and the opening of 100% of the ballot boxes for the recount of the ballots. Only transparency can avoid a worsening of the conflict.

Furthermore, we strongly condemn the interference of pro-imperialist bodies and governments -such as the Organization of American States and the U.S. State Department— that seek to take advantage of the situation in order to impose their dark interests, which have nothing to do with the legitimate aspirations of the Venezuelan people.

Our demand is clear: respect for popular sovereignty, democratic freedoms and other constitutional guarantees. The consolidation of an authoritarian regime, at the service of national and foreign capital, can never be a better option.

**Political Bureau of the Central Committee
Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV)**

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