



SOLIDARITY MESSAGE FROM THE WORKERS PARTY OF IRELAND TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA AGAINST IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION

The Workers Party of Ireland condemns the announcement by U.S. President Donald Trump on 6th August of a total U.S. economic blockade of Venezuela. By virtue of this illegal U.S. executive order, all entities within the United States and worldwide, whether individual, corporate or governmental, are prohibited from engaging in any economic, commercial or financial transactions with the Venezuelan government and any associated individual or entity. The U.S. puppet, Juan Guaidó, is, of course, not subject to any restrictions. The illegal seizure by the U.S. of a ship carrying food is a deliberate and high-handed act of aggression and a violation of the human rights of the Venezuelan people.

This follows actions earlier this year when the U.S. government seized Venezuela's CITGO oil properties based in the United States, and tens of billions of dollars in Venezuela's gold, money, and property worldwide.

Having defeated the U.S. sponsored coup, U.S. imperialism is now attempting to starve the people of Venezuela into submission. Prior to the election of the late Hugo Chavez as President, little of the wealth of Venezuela contributed to the general welfare of the poor and the working class. The political structure of Venezuela was beset by exploitation, nepotism and corruption. The social assets generated by the oil wealth went predominantly into the pockets of an elite few, leaving massive urban populations to live in *barrios* without basic infrastructure, water, electricity, education or health care. The "Bolivarian Revolution" under Chávez led to huge infrastructural spending and the use of oil wealth on health care and literacy programmes for the poor and, in fact, the country's oil wealth increased under his tenure. The government nationalised many key industries of the Venezuelan economy, such as the country's largest telecommunications industry, cement and steel companies, the majority of

its electricity industry as well as many hotels, recreational and transport facilities. He increased educational access for the poor, redistributed land back to the country's indigenous population, reduced infant mortality, increased life expectancy, decreased child malnutrition, increased pensions for the elderly, increased food production and consumption, reduced unemployment, shortened the average work week, increased the minimum wage and provided state aid to the unemployed.

The Bolivarian government, like the Republic of Cuba which also chose a path in the interests of its people rather than the monopolies, has since its inception faced relentless hostility, an attempted coup and a planned strategy of economic war. The Workers Party has condemned the U.S. sponsored attempted coup against the democratically-elected government of Nicolás Maduro and the recognition of Juan Guaidó, who illegally, arrogantly and in contempt of the democratically expressed wishes of the people of Venezuela, announced himself as interim President of Venezuela.

The Workers Party of Ireland stands in solidarity with the working class of Venezuela, with the elected President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, with the progressive forces that are rallying to defend the President and the independence and territorial integrity of Venezuela, and, in particular with our brave comrades in the Communist Party of Venezuela. We demand an end to the interference and aggression against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and demand respect for its sovereignty and independence. Our Party offers our solidarity and support to the Bolivarian Revolution and the Venezuelan people.

Gerry Grainger

Member of the Central Executive Committee responsible for International Relations

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