

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, COMMENDING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY'S SANCTIONING OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT NICOLAS MADURO; CONDEMNING THE RESULTS OF THE RECENT ELECTION TO INSTITUTE A NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY; DENOUNCING THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO COOPERATE WITH INTERNATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS; DEMANDING THE RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS IN VENEZUELA; URGING THE MADURO REGIME TO RECOGNIZE THE DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY; SUPPORTING A DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN VENEZUELA; URGING THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO GRANT TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS TO VENEZUELAN NATIONALS LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES; AND APPROVING AND DIRECTING TRANSMITTAL OF THE ATTACHED CORRESPONDENCE TO PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP.

WHEREAS, on July 31, 2017, the United States Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") sanctioned the President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, and added him to OFAC's list of Specially Designated Nationals along with seven other members of the Venezuelan government; and

WHEREAS, due to OFAC's sanctions, all of Maduro's assets subject to U.S. jurisdiction have been frozen, U.S. persons are prohibited from doing business with him, and Maduro has been denied access to U.S. financial and commercial systems; and

WHEREAS, Maduro now joins Bashar al-Assad of Syria, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Kim Jong-un of North Korea as one of only four heads of state across the globe to be sanctioned in this manner; and

WHEREAS, Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin has also warned that any others who participate in supporting the authoritarian Maduro regime could be exposed to future U.S. sanctions for their role in undermining democratic processes in Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, to further restrict President Maduro's regime and to condemn tyranny and dictatorship in Venezuela, a new Executive Order was issued by the Trump Administration, effective August 25, 2017, which bars the purchase in U.S. markets of new securities issued by the Venezuelan government and its state oil company, and blocks dealing in certain existing bonds owned by Venezuela's public sector; and

WHEREAS, recently, the Maduro regime called a special national election to institute and certify a new political body in Venezuela known as the National Constituent Assembly; and

WHEREAS, this new and illegitimate National Constituent Assembly is empowered to rewrite the Venezuelan Constitution in any way Maduro envisions, including dismantling any branch of the government; and

WHEREAS, over 120 individuals have died in recent months protesting the Maduro regime, with 16 such deaths occurring on Sunday, July 30, 2017; and

WHEREAS, during the early morning of August 1, 2017, political opposition leaders Leopoldo Lopez and Antonio Ledezma were taken from their homes by Venezuelan security forces; and

WHEREAS, in May 2016, for the 11th consecutive year, the U.S. Department of State determined that Venezuela was not cooperating fully with U.S. counterterrorism efforts, noting credible reports that Venezuela maintained a permissive environment supportive of activities benefitting known terrorist groups; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of State's Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 notes that the Venezuelan government took no action against senior Venezuelan government officials who were designated under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act by the U.S. Department of the Treasury for materially assisting the trafficking activities of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); and

WHEREAS, due to the crumbling socioeconomic infrastructure in Venezuela, it is not safe for Venezuelan nationals to return to Venezuela under current conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security has the power to grant temporary protected status to nationals of certain countries for humanitarian causes and such status should be afforded to Venezuelan nationals living in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami Beach are home to a sizable population of Venezuelan nationals; and

WHEREAS, on August 7, 2017, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners passed Resolution No. R-778-17, and approved correspondence addressed to United States President Donald J. Trump, disapproving of the Maduro regime; and the County has repeatedly taken steps to condemn the actions of the Maduro regime, while supporting diplomatic efforts to promote democracy in Venezuela, pursuant to the adoption of the following Resolutions:

- Resolution No. R-253-14, which condemned the Venezuelan government for using violence and intimidation against political opposition and urged the federal government to take immediate diplomatic action;
- Resolution No. R-455-14, which urged the previous U.S. administration and the Secretary of Homeland Security to grant temporary protected status to Venezuelan nationals in the United States;
- Resolution No. R-526-17, which urged the federal government to impose sanctions on officials or persons acting on behalf of the Venezuelan government whom the President determined are responsible for, or complicit in, the commission of serious human rights abuses;

- Resolution No. R-527-17, which supported House Resolution 259, a federal resolution expressing concern over and condemnation of the political, economic, social, and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela;
- Resolution No. R-528-17, which supported H.R. 2161, a bill entitled the Venezuelan Refugee Assistance Act, which would allow Venezuelans in the United States to apply for legal permanent resident status;
- Resolution No. R-530-17, which further condemned the Venezuelan government for using violence and intimidation against political opposition and continued to urge the federal government to take immediate diplomatic action; and
- Resolution No. R-777-17, which urged the federal government and the State of Florida to support economic sanctions against the Venezuelan government; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach, Florida support further action designed to hasten the return of democracy to the people of Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution also incorporates and approves the attached correspondence to President Donald J. Trump, which expresses strong disapproval of the Maduro regime.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby commend the United States Department of the Treasury's sanctioning of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, denounce the Venezuelan government's failure to cooperate with international counterterrorism efforts, demand the Maduro regime to release all political prisoners in Venezuela, urge the Maduro regime to recognize the democratically elected National Assembly, support a democratic transition in Venezuela, urge President Donald J. Trump and the United States Secretary of Homeland Security to grant temporary protected status to Venezuelan nationals living in the United States, approve the attached correspondence to President Donald J. Trump, and direct the City Clerk to transmit a certified copy of the attached correspondence to President Donald J. Trump.

PASSED and ADOPTED this ____ day of September 2017.

ATTEST:

Philip Levine, Mayor

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION**

City Attorney

9/11/17

Date

September 13, 2017

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Current Events in Venezuela

Dear Mr. President:

The Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach, Florida, are writing to convey the City Commission's position on recent events in Venezuela. Specifically, this City Commission writes to:

1. Commend the United States Department of the Treasury's sanctioning of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and the issuance of your Executive Order, effective August 25, 2017, imposing economic sanctions against Venezuela;
2. Condemn the results of the recent election in Venezuela to institute a National Constituent Assembly;
3. Denounce the Venezuelan government's failure to cooperate with international counterterrorism efforts; and
4. Urge your Administration to grant temporary protected status to Venezuelan nationals living in the United States.

The current crisis in Venezuela is of great importance to the residents of the City of Miami Beach (City), which is located in Miami-Dade County ("County"). Our County is home to the largest Venezuelan-American community in the United States and our constituents are troubled by the unfolding of events in Venezuela. Many County residents have family members still living under the oppressive conditions created by the Maduro regime. Because of the magnitude of these issues, the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach have passed and adopted the attached Resolution commending the actions taken by your Administration, and supporting the above-referenced actions to be taken, to restore democracy to Venezuela.

The sociopolitical climate in Venezuela has only worsened in recent weeks as President Nicolas Maduro continues his efforts to solidify his power at the expense of the will of the Venezuelan people. The Maduro regime's silencing and jailing of political opponents, rampant human rights violations, and the overhaul of Venezuela's system of

government is at significant odds with the fundamental values of democracy championed by the United States. Numerous other democratic nations and American allies across the globe have voiced similar concerns with the Maduro regime. Further, the U.S. Department of State determined in its annual Counterterrorism Report that Venezuela was not cooperating fully with U.S. counterterrorism efforts, noting credible reports that Venezuela maintained a permissive environment for support of activities benefitting known terrorist groups.

The Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach condemn the Maduro regime for its flagrant disrespect of democratic institutions and support the imposition of sanctions on members of the Maduro regime, denounce the Venezuelan government's use of violence and intimidation tactics against political opposition, and urge the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to grant temporary protected status to Venezuelan nationals living in the United States.

On July 31, 2017, in response to the results of the sham election creating an illegitimate National Constituent Assembly designed to abrogate and rewrite the Venezuelan Constitution, the U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned President Nicolas Maduro, adding him to a list of seven other members of the Venezuelan government who have been denied access to U.S. financial and commercial systems. Maduro now joins Bashar al-Assad of Syria, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Kim Jong-un of North Korea as one of only four heads of state across the globe to be sanctioned in this manner.

The United States is Venezuela's largest trading partner, with an estimated transfer of over \$23.9 billion in goods in 2015 alone. As such, the decisions your Administration will make with respect to the Maduro regime will greatly shape the political and social landscape of Venezuela for years to come.

The crisis in Venezuela has reached historic proportions, but the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach believe these issues to be solvable. To that end, the Mayor and City Commission reiterate its support and commitment to efforts that restore democracy to the Venezuelan people.

Most respectfully,

ATTEST:

Philip Levine, Mayor

Rafael E. Granada, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION

City Attorney *JA*

Date