



Social, Cultural and Humanitarian
Committee

SOCHUM

*Topic A: The Humanitarian Crisis
in Venezuela due to Political
Instability in the Region*

ALEXMUN 2017



Dear delegates,

The Social Cultural and Humanitarian Committee is pleased to introduce you to our 2017 committee, we hope you are as excited as we are to work together.

My name is Isabella Vera Stephens and I'll be your president during the model. I'm studying third semester in the Bachillerato Alexander Bain. I'll be using my leadership skills and abilities to guide you through this committee. Any questions you can e-mail me: isabella.vera@bab.edu.mx .

My name is Clara Sofia Avila Islas and I will be your conference officer. All the members of the committee, including myself, believe that our team is strong, and what we need is people that want to participate, learn and have fun, as well as have a good attitude and be committed with the work and the model. I hope you have fun; if you have any doubt or comment please contact me at this email address clara.availa@bab.edu.mx

Hello, my name is Jeannette Harfush Kuri and I will be your moderator in this year's SOCHUM committee! throughout the model I will moderate your debate in order to have a fruitful and fluid discussion.

I have been part of three UN models, and my experiences have all been great, so I expect yours will to be the same as well. Please let me know if you have any comment or doubts about SOCHUM at this email address: jeannette.harfush@bab.edu.mx

Hello, my name is Nicolas Anaya Altamirano and I will be serving as the political advisor of the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (**SOCHUM**) for Alexmun 2017. United Nations Models help people developed their communication, leadership and persuasion skills, and that is the main reason of why I have decided to join this committee. Feel free to reach me anytime you wish for any doubts at nicolas.anaya@bab.edu.mx .

Sincerely yours,

The SOCHUM's Chair

About SOCHUM

The Social, Humanitarian & Cultural committee (SOCHUM) is the third committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It was created in 1945 and Maria Emma Mejia of Colombia chairs it today.

The objective of this committee is to attend social, humanitarian and human rights issues that affect people all around the world. It is in charge of protecting, watching and identify countries where these human rights have been violated for some reason.

Another of the SOCHUM committee`s objective is to work with nations through reasonable solutions to help countries that are facing internal problematics or difficulties, for example, lack of resources for their population or crisis caused by some natural phenomenon.

This committee is important due to the connections it has with the government of the UN`s country members. SOCHUM has support from many city centers around the world, making its influence in international politics a reality.

SOCHUM considers that education is one of the most important subjects that countries should improve on, as it is the base of the development of an educated society that respects human rights. SOCHUM also takes into account the difficulties countries face when trying to overcome challenges, and acts accordingly in order to solve these problems. SOCHUM has become a watchman of international peace and stability, stepping in whenever, and wherever, help is needed.

Introduction to the topic

To be able to discuss the humanitarian issue of Venezuela we need to first understand the political problem that led to this crisis. This crisis has a start last century when the Dictator Juan Vicente Gomez made Venezuela the largest oil exporter in the world. In the 70's Venezuela grew a lot thanks to the oil boom, and their currency peaked. With this the oil industry was nationalized. In 1989 the president led the country to an economic depression, to which Hugo Chavez opposed. Chavez was elected president nine years later, and launched the Bolivarian Revolution (which included a new political system, and an anti US foreign policy). Chavez, however, wanted only to keep control of the State. This gave way to a rebellion attempt in 2002, which was quickly repressed by Chavez. At this point Chavez, controlled the parliaments and won a very controversial election in 2007. His first action was to nationalize energy and telecommunications; this decision led to huge opposition and general anger in the population. Venezuela keeps really good relationship with Russia and China. In 2009 Chavez had complete control over Venezuela. In January of 2010 the Bolivian started to devalue, and large group of opposition groups started to form and act out. Three years later Hugo Chavez died and was succeeded by Nicolas Maduro. At this moment, inflation was running at more than 50% a year (2014). A large number of protest and antigovernment rallies started, which brought a lot of death because of the repression from the government. This got worst and by 2016 there were hundreds of thousands of people protesting and blaming Maduro for the economic crisis. In July, the opposition marked the 100th day of protest and one of the opposing leaders, Leopoldo Lopez was moved to house arrest.

The government seems to block and avoid any means of communication such as T.V or newspaper that criticizes Maduro's government.

Venezuelan citizens have declared that their only way to communicate with the outside world is social media such as Facebook or Twitter. They say, "SOCIAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION ARE THE ONLY POSSESSION WE HAVEN'T TAKEN FROM US".

The actual situation that Venezuela is living today is clearly a topic that must be discussed and heard all over the world.

Venezuela is a country located in South America, so most of the crisis also affects nearby countries. Mainly, Brazil and Colombia, their neighboring countries. Venezuela also has good relations with Russia and Nicaragua. Definitely, the most turbulent diplomatic relationship has been with the United States; this tie has since 2002 with Chavez's government and politics, to the point where it is virtually non-existent. In 2015 the Obama administration declared Venezuela a security threat. As a consequence of this a lot of countries that aren't allied with the United States, such as Palestine, have strengthened their ties with Venezuela. In terms of violence, the capital, Caracas, has one of the highest homicide rates and since Chavez got to power the number of kidnapping per year has increased at an alarming rate. This, plus the huge involvement in drug trafficking going on in Venezuela and Colombia hasn't help the growth of the country.

Venezuela has one of the largest oil and natural gas reserves in the world, this helped boost the economy, but ultimately brought them to a crisis. Since 1999 with the presidency of Hugo Chavez followed in 2013 with Nicolas Maduro, the country has gone downhill, putting the citizens at risk.

Current Issue

Today, Venezuela is facing an economic and social crisis in which more than half of the population is suffering, as they lack basic resources such as bread and water. Venezuelan citizens attribute this problem to the current government led by Nicolas Maduro. Maduro arrived to the power after Hugo Chavez' death. Nevertheless, Maduro's political career began when he became an esclavista of the liberation of Chavez; they both became great peers because of their preference on a socialist government; in the year 2006 he became the exterior relation minister of Venezuela, and by the next year he became the leader of the PSUV¹, in which he and all the members of the party supported Chavez's government. Finally, in March of 2013 President Hugo Chavez died and Maduro came to power through elections. The city is today trying to be heard by the government, but their response is aggression and brutality that have to led to many deaths. This movement is mostly led by young people in an age range of sixteen to twenty-one years old. According to the source " La Lupa. (2017). *SOS Venezuela. Crisis actual en Venezuela.*(Video)" Maduro and his peers live surrounded by luxuries while the country wakes up in the morning not knowing if they are going to be able to eat.

From a humanitarian perspective, Venezuela is clearly in need of assistance. As a consequence of the strict restrictions in imports and inflation, food and medicine's prices are higher than ever. Most hospitals don't even have supplies to operate, therefore the hundreds of injured people by the authorities most likely die. Human Rights Watch has asked to declare Venezuela in a humanitarian crisis but the CEPAL opposed this proposal because they think this doesn't match the reality this country is living.

Apart from the severe shortages in medicine and food, that generates protests that are suppressed with violence, there are also problems in prisons, impunity to police that harass protestors, human rights defenders, and independent media. People struggle to find basic needs; there is little food, really high prices and overall subpar living conditions. It is the Committee's responsibility to find a solution to this problem as soon as possible.

¹ Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela

Topics to be addressed

Why hasn't the problems in Venezuela been solved yet?

What does the Venezuelan city look for?

Is the government of Maduro responding wisely? Why?

Has the crisis reached a point where other countries should intervene? How should they do so?

How can other countries aid Venezuela?

Should Maduro be held accountable for the crisis?

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