

## **Second Plenary Meeting of Dialogue's™ Venezuela Working Group Calls for Peaceful Democratic Transition and Unhindered Entry of Humanitarian Aid in Venezuela**

**International** 2019-02-23 14:53:08

Washington, DC - The Inter-American Dialogue's [Venezuela Working Group](#) (VWG) met on February 14-15 in Bogotá, Colombia to analyze the urgent democratic and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. In the course of its deliberations, the VWG met with civil society organizations and experts and with leading representatives of the Venezuelan National Assembly, the Government of Colombia, and the United Nations. The group approved the following statement:

*The Venezuela Working Group is deeply troubled by the critical humanitarian crisis affecting millions of Venezuelans. The crisis is the most visible manifestation of the institutional breakdown in the country. We commend those within Venezuela and in the international community who are mobilizing humanitarian assistance and distributing food, medicine, and medical supplies in Venezuela under extremely challenging circumstances. It is critical that Venezuelans, including those involved in the mobilization of aid, not be prevented from participating in the distribution of such assistance or subjected to additional violence.*

*There can be no equivocation regarding the gravity of the humanitarian emergency in Venezuela or the need for a commensurate response. We echo the recent [call](#) of 135 Venezuelan civil society organizations for all relevant national and multilateral authorities to explicitly recognize the full scale of the humanitarian crisis in the country. We further call on civilian and military authorities in Venezuela to refrain from any actions that obstruct the entry or delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Venezuelan people. All actors should refrain from further politicizing the distribution of food and medicine.*

*A peaceful, democratic transition followed by the reconstruction of Venezuela's governing institutions represents the only viable and sustainable solution to the visible suffering of millions of Venezuelans. Overcoming the humanitarian crisis is possible only with political change, including a democratic, transitional government and the celebration of free elections allowing for necessary measures to be adopted with the support of the international community. We call for respect for the free will of the Venezuelan people.*

### **About the Venezuelan Working Group (VWG) at the Inter-American Dialogue**

The [Venezuela Working Group](#) is a task force of hemispheric leaders committed to formulating and actively promoting policy responses to the crisis in Venezuela. The group's first report, [No Strangers at the Gate](#), focused on the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis. A forthcoming second report will address the urgent need for democratic transition in the country.

The VWG is chaired by former President Laura Chinchilla (Costa Rica) and former Ambassador Donna Hrinak (United States). Its work is coordinated by Michael Camilleri, Director of the Dialogue's Peter D. Bell Rule of Law Program. VWG members include: Andrés Serbin (Argentina), Carlos Heredia (Mexico), Diego García-Sayán (Peru), Feliciano Reyna (Venezuela), Jamal Khokhar (Canada), Jeff Davidow (United States), José Ignacio Hernández (Venezuela), Juan Carlos Pinzón (Colombia), Juan Gabriel Valdés (Chile), Roberta Jacobson (United States), Rosario Córdoba (Colombia), Sergio Etchegoyen (Brazil), Serena Joseph-Harris (Trinidad and Tobago), Vanessa Rubio (Mexico), and Verónica Zubillaga (Venezuela).

### **About the Inter-American Dialogue**

The Inter-American Dialogue engages its network of global leaders to foster democratic governance, prosperity, and social equity in Latin America and the Caribbean. Together, we shape policy debate, generate ideas, devise solutions, and enhance collaboration within the Western Hemisphere.

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**CONTACT:**

Press, Inter-American Dialogue  
press@thedialogue.org