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Venezuela

Political Declaration of the Party of Revolution and Socialism

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We publish here in full the political declaration drawn up in August 2005 by the comrades who undertook the foundation of the PRS. This document is conceived as a basis for discussion. At the invitation of the PRS comrades the Fourth International will participate in this discussion and forthcoming issues of International Viewpoint will reflect this.

We, the workers, peasants, students and inhabitants of the neighbourhoods and rural communities of Venezuela, are conscious of the great advances and successes won through tenacious struggle over the past six years of the revolutionary process.

We are conscious of the meaning of the Missions [1] the broadening of democratic liberties, as well as the content of social and economic inclusion of the “leyes habilitantes” [2].

On the other hand, it is also clear that there is still much lacking in providing a structural response to the serious problems existing in the poorest sectors of our country.

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/Bolivarians.jpg>]

The highest level of available oil resources in our history, in the hands of a government that counts on the sympathy of the great majority of our people, has not been enough to resolve the problems of poverty and exclusion, nor has it freed us from imperialist subjection and the power of the big monopolies.

There is no socialism without expropriation of the big private means of production.

The oil money alone cannot resolve the problem of capitalist exploitation, the origin of all our evils. To overcome it, the economy should cease to be in the hands of a handful of rich bosses, the conspiratorial oligarchy [3] and the multinational monopolies, and pass into the control of the workers and the people in power; it is necessary to take the step of expropriating the big companies which are in the hands of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. There is no socialism without expropriation of the big private means of production.

None of the parties which currently have ministers in the government or members of parliament have shown themselves ready to guarantee until the end the struggle for the Second Independence [4] in the face of imperialism, through the liquidation of the social relations of capitalist production and through socialism as a regime of ownership and collective government of the workers and the people.

Their practice is reduced to introducing timid reforms inside capitalism, or conjunctural policies, which have not resolved and will not resolve the problem of exploitation and oppression. They maintain intact the real centres of power and economic control of the oligarchy and imperialism in our country, and at the same time they show a clear tendency to engender new and corrupt bureaucratic castes in the state apparatus that they lead, opening the way to the reinstallation of the old elites, bogging down the revolutionary process.

It is clearer every day that under the leadership of these parties the revolution will be frozen and we will not advance towards socialism.

Facing this crossroads, we the revolutionaries must assume the unshakable commitment to envisage and propose to

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the workers and the people, a political alternative which gives free course to the most dynamic, progressive and combative forces of the organized people, in the perspective of fighting for socialism with democracy, without exploiter bosses, nor bureaucrats embedded in the state.

It becomes urgent to offer the popular sectors, workers, women, peasants, students, indigenous communities and middle layers of the population who sympathize with social change, a project of socialism, without ambiguities, which breaks with capitalism, the exploitation of man by man, and which fights for the definitive liberation of the human species from any form of oppression and exploitation, under the government of the workers.

While presenting this political alternative, it is also necessary to envisage the construction of tools that can win these basic changes that Venezuelan society and the world as a whole require.

The workers have advanced in building the UNT; the popular sectors, neighbourhoods, peasants and students organizing themselves in fronts and associations, and diverse forms of popular organization continue to proliferate.

They lack only the construction of the political tool of all these sectors, which organizes and strengthens, on the basis of a revolutionary programme and a political discipline, revolutionary militant activity towards socialism. It is necessary to build a party of the workers, the popular and revolutionary sectors, which on the basis of national and international experience and in agreement with the short, medium and long-term demands of the people, elaborates a Transitional Programme to advance towards socialism.

This political party must necessarily be new and different from those that exist. Through the revolutionary experience of recent years, the people have broken definitively with AD, COPEI, MAS, Causa R, Bandera Roja, Primero Justicia, Proyecto Venezuela, and so on [5], which it has recognized as oligarchic, putschist and pro-imperialist political structures.

But it has also come to the conclusion that the parties of the Fifth Republic are electoral apparatuses, that reproduce the old vices of the politicking of the Fourth Republic [6] and which do not have as their perspective the struggle for socialism without bureaucrats or bosses.

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/todoelpoder.jpg>]

It should be genuinely democratic and organize inside it the best fighters and activists of the revolutionary process. It should have as final end popular and workers' mobilization and the struggle for the conquest of power for the workers and the people. A revolutionary party which:

– fights for socialism, shows solidarity with the struggles of the people, defends national sovereignty, confronts imperialism, demands non-payment of the foreign debt and fights for a general increase in wages.

– confronts day after day the bosses and the exploiting and oppressive landowners. Which has the internationalist vocation that the liberator Simón Bolívar bequeathed to us. A party that is in the front line of support for the expropriation of the companies so that they are controlled and administered directly by the workers. A party that fights for a new society, free from exploitation and humiliation, that fights for socialism and democracy.

We should help the people become conscious of the fact that the problems that face us are insurmountable if we do not put an end to capitalism and private ownership of the means of production and fight for social revolution on a world scale.

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Socialism is incompatible with the idea that there are national or international bosses involved in the development of the nation. We cannot conciliate the interests of the exploited and the exploiters; by this road we will only arrive at a caricature of revolution. This strategic difference with the reformist discourse of class conciliation justifies the construction of the revolutionary party.

But it is also necessary to signal that beyond this difference, we are committed to defend to the end the government of president Chávez from any coup attempt or destabilization by imperialism and the Venezuelan bourgeois opposition. We will defend, at the sides of the Bolivarian people, as we have done on April 13 [2002] and during the oil sabotage [7] the government of president Chávez against the putschist conspiracy of the oligarchic right and US imperialism, as well as all the democratic conquests won through the process of the Bolivarian revolution.

We will accompany the workers and the people in the experience with this government but in seeking the perspective of the development of workers' and peasants' power, popular, participatory and active, until government is directly exercised in a democratic manner by the workers to adopt, without vacillation or bureaucratic obstacles, the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist measures capable of leading us towards liberatory socialism.

This is the right time to launch the challenge of building that organization. The public meeting that we have organized on July 9 in the Teatro Imperial in the city of Caracas, in which delegations from all over the country and of diverse origins and political and organizational experiences participated, confirmed to us that hundreds and thousands of activists were seeking a revolutionary and socialist political structure that responds to their expectations and demands.

As a consequence of this reality, we have come together in the city of Valencia to set up the National Constituting Committee of the PARTIDO REVOLUCIÓN Y SOCIALISMO (PRS), and to discuss the characteristics of the political conjuncture and stage that the country is going through, and have reached the following accords:

POLITICAL ACCORDS

– We support those who struggle

We demand an immediate solution to the various conflicts which Venezuelan workers are currently experiencing. In particular those of Chrysler in Carabobo; those of the Social Security in Barquisimeto; the workers in the hydrologic sector, the mining industry and at Sidor in Bolívar state; the shipyard workers in the state of Sucre; those of the agri-foodstuffs company Guaica in Guárico; those of the multinational Coca-Cola in the state of Táchira and so on.

We support the thousands of peasants who mobilize before the Palace of Miraflores to demand that president Chávez applies the agrarian reform that finishes with the latifundio, and the investigation and punishment of the backers of the bands of thugs who wish to eliminate the most prominent peasant activists.

We are at the sides of the indigenous communities that oppose the development of coal in the sierra of Perijá, which degrades its territories and violates the ancestral traditions of the communities.

Together with the revolutionary youth we repudiate the vile murders of students by police bodies that maintain an authoritarian and repressive presence, typical of the Fourth Republic. We demand investigation and punishment, while favouring the democratization of the police bodies, in a way that ends their vertical character and allows the election of commissioners by the communities and the police to organize unions to defend their economic, social and democratic rights.

– We propose an emergency economic plan

For a better use of the resources coming from the bonanza in oil prices, we propose that a National Plan of Public Works and Housing is developed that generates employment worthy of the name for millions of Venezuelan workers.

We demand that president Chávez extends in the same proportion to all the workers and employees of the public and private companies the wage increase granted to the components of the armed forces. We oppose the payment of the fraudulent foreign debt and pronounce ourselves in favour of the realization of a National Referendum through which the people can pronounce themselves democratically on the foreign debt and the international reserve surpluses.

We urge president Chávez to institutionalize the Missions and to urgently resolve the grave crisis in the systems of health, social security and national education. We oppose the use of the Missions for clientelist ends by the mayors, governors or parliamentary deputies and to the attempts to use the Missions as a means of introducing greater flexibility among the work force.

We support the projects of indigenous development as self-managed experiences of the community with the active and decision-making participation of the people, to supply the basic and urgent needs of thousands of families who are excluded by capitalism. We demand the granting of cheap credit and technical assistance to communities and peasant organizations to develop agricultural projects.

We fight for the elimination of the supposed “autonomy” of the Central Bank of Venezuela. We demand the nationalization of the private banking sector and the creation of a big national bank that concentrates all the resources originating from exports, renationalization of the banks currently in the hands of the transnational groups, with workers' control and investigation and punishment of the financial groups and entrepreneurs that promote currency flight.

We fight for the calling of an Oil Constituent Assembly that allows discussion on cargo oil policy, the portfolio of businesses of the PDVSA and the cancellation of all the concessions granted to the multinationals.

We fight for revolutionary co-management, workers' control and socialism. We understand co-management as a transitional stage towards socialism, during which the workers, in a free, democratic and revolutionary fashion, gain experience in administering public and private companies; advancing towards workers' control of production, the accountability of enterprises and the elimination of the social relations of capitalist production, to replace them by those of the socialist model.

We pronounce ourselves in solidarity with the workers of the electric sector, Alcasa and other companies, where the experience of co-management has gone furthest, so that this experience is genuinely democratic, reverses the techno-bureaucracy and aims at workers' control and socialism.

We fight for the re-opening of any company closed in an arbitrary fashion by the bosses and we demand from the government its expropriation and restitution to the workers so that they can administer it and recommence production.

We are with the UNT and we support the Corriente Sindical Clasista, Revolucionaria y Democrática. We recognize the UNT as the trade union structure that is the most representative and most in accord with the interests of the Venezuelan workers. We place ourselves at the side of the class-conscious and revolutionary sectors that fight

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against the parasites and the new bureaucracy that seeks to crystallize inside it.

We fight for the autonomy and full political independence of the UNT, with respect to the bosses, the state and the government. We demand that the workers and the communities are consulted for discussion and the adoption of laws. We pronounce ourselves against the restriction of the right to strike contemplated in the partial reform of the Penal Code.

We fight for unity of action, through the Fronts of Struggle of the workers, peasants, students, housewives, the rural and indigenous communities, to defend the rights of the people or the conquest of new demands.

We defend the free right of trade union organization and support the indefinite extension of the Decree of Labour Irremovability and its application to all workers and employees who earn less than a million BolÁ-ars as salary.

We condemn the employers' repression and demand exemplary sanctions against the heads of companies who violate the rights of workers and do not respect the standards of the Ministry of Labour.

We support the proposal of the UNT in the state of Sucre, where it demands that the state issue a certificate which attests that the private companies respect the rights of workers.

We support the self-organization and self-determination of the population. The communities and the workers have understood that to deepen the revolutionary process they must set up their own organizational tools, democratic, autonomous and sovereign. As revolutionaries we commit ourselves to push forward and develop all the forms of self-organization adopted by the people to deepen the revolution.

We are in solidarity with all the fighters and activists, who declare themselves in rebellion against the orders imposed by the "political directors" including against the "benevolent finger" of the President, which has been used to justify corrupt and bureaucratic practices, in opposition to the right of the people to determine its political and electoral choices, as in the current electoral debate.

We give our support to those who, having won popular support in the internal elections of the parties, have presented their candidacies on an individual basis to respect the self-determination of the people.

Destitution and prison for the corrupt. No to impunity

We repudiate corruption and all the negligent practices that waste the national patrimony. We demand the immediate dismissal and imprisonment of any public or private functionary involved in fraudulent practices.

We cannot turn the page if the human, political, economic and social wrongs that the putschist company bosses and imperialism have inflicted on the people by constant conspiratorial and counter-revolutionary actions go unpunished.

Investigation and punishment of the owners of the private media who promoted the putschist actions of April 2002 and the oil sabotage. Updating of the details on the terrorist action that led to the death of Danilo Anderson [\[8\]](#). Public judgment, with the participation of the trade union leaders and revolutionaries against the putschist Carlos Ortega. [\[9\]](#)

– We are internationalists

In insisting on our internationalist conviction we pronounce ourselves in solidarity with the peoples of the world under

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attack form imperialist military brutality, in particular with Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti; in the same way that we are in solidarity with the just struggle of the Bolivian people.

We reject the pragmatic diplomacy of the government concerning the revolutionary processes in Latin America. We are for the support to all the processes of struggle and mobilization of the peoples, respecting the rhythms, dynamics and perspectives that their protagonists trace

Our methods of action: democracy and mobilization

All these demands can only be satisfied if we, workers and people, mobilize ourselves in a unitary and massive fashion to demand basic solutions to the problems that Venezuelan working people face today.

We distance ourselves totally from terrorist methods and call on the mobilization of the masses at national and international level to confront the enemies of the workers and peoples of the world who fight for their liberation.

We fight to democratize the professional, trade union, community and political structures that the workers and people adopt. Our commitment in relation to the rank and file is to struggle so that they decide.

Organizational accords

1. To set up the National Constituting Committee of the new political organization, to which we give the name PARTIDO REVOLUCIÓN Y SOCIALISMO and the acronym PRS.
2. To publish from August onwards a national bimonthly newspaper, which we call OPCIÓN SOCIALISTA.
3. To hold regional meetings in August and September, leading to the setting up of state committees for building the Partido Revolución y Socialismo.
4. To form activist nuclei of the PRS in all the towns, neighbourhoods and workplaces.
5. To distribute the draft Political Programme and Statutes of the new organization among the activists and adherents of the new organization.
6. To hold a National Ideological Seminar on October 20, 21 and 22 so that the activists have an initial discussion to precise, complete or amend the draft Programme and Statutes and define the parameters for the drawing up of the Political Theses and Platform of Struggle of the new organization.
7. To ensure full autonomy and political independence, the new organization will not depend on any institutional or enterprise financing, so we are launching a National Financial Campaign, through which affiliates, sympathizers, friends and people in general, can give us their support and solidarity.
8. To hold a National Constituent Congress in early 2006 to adopt political and organizational theses and the programme and statutes of the new party.

– The National Constituting Committee of the PRS is made up of four national coordinators - Orlando Chirino, Gonzalo Gomez, Miguel Angel Hernandez A. and Stalin Perez Borges - and some state coordinators: in the state of

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Anzoategui - Jose Boda, Luis Diaz; in that of Aragua - Emilio Bastidas, Richard Gallardo, Humberto Lopez; in that of Bolívar - Edgar Caldera, Jose Melendez, Orlando Perez; in that of Carabobo - Jose Barreto, Ismael Hernandez, William Porras, Americo Tabata, Jesus Vargas; in that of Caracas - Roger Bonilla, Marco Tulio Diaz, Tony Leon, Jose Mendoza, Franklin Zambrano ; in that of Falcon - Victor Garcia, Horacio Medina ; in that of Miranda - Armando Guerra, Yan Marcano ; in Tachira - Vilma Vivas, Javier Arellano; in Vargas - Antonio Jaspe; in Yaracuy - Hernan Brito, Oswaldo Villegas.

[1] The "Missions" are mass programmes of education and public health targeted on poorer neighbourhoods and organized outside of the state structures; they have been successfully implemented over the last three years.,

[2] Laws that favour the activity of small producers and access to ownership, particularly in the areas of farming and fishing

[3] An allusion to the mobilization of the privileged classes in favour of a coup to overthrow Chávez in 2002.

[4] An expression referring to the need for the old Spanish colonies of Latin America to emancipate themselves from imperialist domination.

[5] Democratic Action (AD, social-democratic) and the Social Christian Party-Committee of Political Organization of Independent Elections (COPEI, Christian Democrat) are the two bourgeois parties which alternated in power between 1958 and 1998. The Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), Causa Radical (CR), Bandera Roja, Primero Justicia, Proyecto Venezuela are parties once classified as on the left, indeed the far left, which have moved into the camp of reaction.

[6] The Fourth Republic refers to the old régime of "representative democracy" beneficial to the rich and pitiless to the poor, which was replaced after the adoption of the "Bolivarian constitution" by the Fifth Republic.

[7] An allusion to the attempts of the bourgeoisie, supported by imperialism, to overthrow president Hugo Chávez on April 13 2002 through a putsch, in the course of which Pedro Carmona, head of the employers' association, proclaimed himself "interim president" for a day while Chávez was arrested and deported to the Caribbean island of Orchilla - an immense popular mobilization put an end to this attempt and on April 14, 2002 Chávez resumed the presidency; from December 2002 the leadership of the oil company, with the support of the corrupt trade union bosses, organized the sabotage of production, which was reduced to 10%, supported by a lock-out in the big commercial enterprises (what the Venezuelan bourgeoisie - with the international media - dared to call a "strike"). In February 2003 the government put an end to this sabotage with the support of the workers, resuming production without the saboteur managers, who were dismissed.,

[8] Danilo Anderson, who was responsible for prosecuting the authors of the coup and the oil sabotage, was assassinated in Autumn 2004.

[9] Carlos Ortega, a leader of the CTV trade union federation, participated in the coup in 2002 along with the head of the employers Pedro Carmona. Exiled, he secretly returned to Venezuela and was arrested in a casino in June 2005.