



By: Daniel Lacalle

# Venezuela election fraud is another example of how Chavismo destroyed the country



As expected, the Maduro dictatorial regime committed another **electoral fraud**, the third in a presidential election, and claimed victory with a bogus recount. At the same time, the fraud was obscene and clumsy. When you read the figures sent by the official body, the percentages are exact!

According to the official report, both candidates would have obtained a number of votes such that the percentage number reported without any rounding is exactly the figure with one decimal. Mathematically, it is impossible.

In essence, it is as if someone received the order to use 51.2% and 44.2% and multiplied them by the number of votes counted. Each of the main contenders received exactly the necessary number of votes to achieve the percentages of 51.2% and 44.2%, without the need for extra decimals or rounding. This is not only a fraudulent act but also a display of incompetence.

The opposition has published its own figures. According to the recount of 24,384 electoral records (81.21% of all votes), Edmundo Gonzales, the opposition leader, received 7,119,768 votes (67%) and Maduro 3,225,819 (30%), which is consistent with the exit polls and the figures estimated by international independent observers.

This election fraud is just another milestone in the disastrous track record of 21st-century socialism that the Chavez regime imposed. A dictatorship always begins by using democracy's rules to destroy it from within.

## A synonym of economic devastation

The Chavez-Maduro regime has become a synonym of economic devastation and social collapse, squandering the largest oil revenue surplus in Venezuela's history in a period of high oil prices and tens of billions of dollars of economic support from China and Russia, among others.

The authoritarian regime often blames an inexistent "blockade" on its economic malaise. However, the reality is very different. Venezuela has no blockade from the US; it's one of their largest trading partners, according to government statistics.

Venezuela has bilateral trade agreements with more than fifty nations and enjoys strong trade relations with China, Russia, India, the United States, Turkey, Brazil, Spain, the Netherlands, and many other nations.

How did the Chavez-Maduro regime destroy Venezuela? They followed socialism's basic rules step by step.

First step. Expropriations. The regime stole 3.4 million hectares of land from their owners, confiscated more than 523,000 apartments, and expropriated 1087 companies.

Second step. The second step involves the destruction of the national currency through the printing of money. Authoritarian regimes always destroy the purchasing power of the currency they issue as a means to indirectly nationalize the economy and make people dependent.

**In the past fourteen years, the national currency has erased fourteen zeros from its nominal value**

As the extraordinary oil revenues disappeared and the management of the national oil company, PDVSA, brought it to the ground by multiplying the number of public employees with political support, abandoning investment, increasing debt, and creating a production slump, the regime decided to "create millionaires" by printing money.

In the past fourteen years, the national currency has erased fourteen zeros from its nominal value. The result was hyperinflation and a monetary collapse. The regime issued a "cryptocurrency backed by oil and gold," the Petro, which sank without a trace.

## Force your opponents to leave

Third step. Force your opponents to leave. Venezuela used to be a country of opportunity, welcoming citizens from all over the world looking for a better life. The 21st-century socialist Chavista regime has forced a mass exodus of more than nine million Venezuelans to emigrate.

In social terms, the Chavista regime has achieved a level of destruction only seen in wartime. According to the National Survey of Living Conditions/Encovi, 80% of the population lives in poverty.

Fourth step. Blame others. José Guerra, an economist at the Venezuelan Observatory of Finance, explains in his book “25 Years of Chavista Governments” how over the past quarter-century, Venezuela’s gross domestic product has plummeted by more than 55%, while the region’s GDP has grown by 25%, per capita income has dropped to less than half, poverty has increased 2.8 times, extreme poverty has multiplied by five, and the real minimum wage has sunk by 99%. 21st Century Socialism led the Venezuelan economy to the utmost misery.

The Chavista regime squandered more than a trillion dollars of oil revenue between 1999 and 2014, making the political leaders obscenely wealthy while the country starved.

## A non-existent blockade

As previously mentioned, the regime points the finger at a non-existent blockade, overlooking the fact that China and Russia have provided Venezuela with soft loans and financial support totaling over \$78 billion since 2014, as reported by the US CRS.

Moreover, since 2013, Venezuela has been the largest beneficiary of soft loans and debt restructuring in the entire region.

## The government keeps more than 260 political prisoners in its prisons

In Venezuela, the only blockade is that which socialism imposes on impoverished citizens. There are sanctions against the leaders who have robbed the Venezuelan people and obliterated the state-owned oil company, PDVSA, which has gone from being the most efficient in the world before chavism to a decapitalized and indebted company on the brink of bankruptcy.

Fifth step. The regime employs tactics such as propaganda, repression, and the silencing of free speech. The regime has shut down over forty national and regional newspapers, nearly forty radio stations, and obstructed the broadcast of over thirty television channels.

The government keeps more than 260 political prisoners in its prisons, according to the Criminal Forum. The NGO Provea published that Maduro’s government killed more than 9,400 people between 2013 and 2023, institutionalising murder.

## Venezuela is a warning sign

Venezuela has been destroyed by a corrupt political elite that has followed every step of the system imposed in Cuba or Nicaragua. It has destroyed all independent institutions, the economy, and currency.



*The world faces the greatest danger when certain "progressive" political parties in the West embrace the tactics of the Chavez-Maduro regime - Daniel Lacalle*

If allowed to remain in power, the fraud in the presidential elections won't be the first or the last. Like all dictatorships, it begins by utilizing democratic methods to dismantle all independent institutions and embezzle the nation's wealth, thereby enriching its leaders to the exclusion of the citizens and plunging them into extreme poverty.

The world faces the greatest danger when certain "progressive" political parties in the West embrace the tactics of the Chavez-Maduro regime.

Venezuela is a warning sign to everyone in the world. One of the most repeated sentences in the political debate in the early 1990s was "Venezuela is not Cuba." And it was. Do not think for a moment that your country is not Venezuela, and you will not suffer what they endured.

Venezuela serves as an example of how corrupt authoritarians can steal a nation when its citizens take freedom and prosperity for granted.