



Our Essequibo

Nicolás Maduro Moros
President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

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Speech at the special session of the National Assembly, Federal Legislative Palace, Caracas, July 6, 2015





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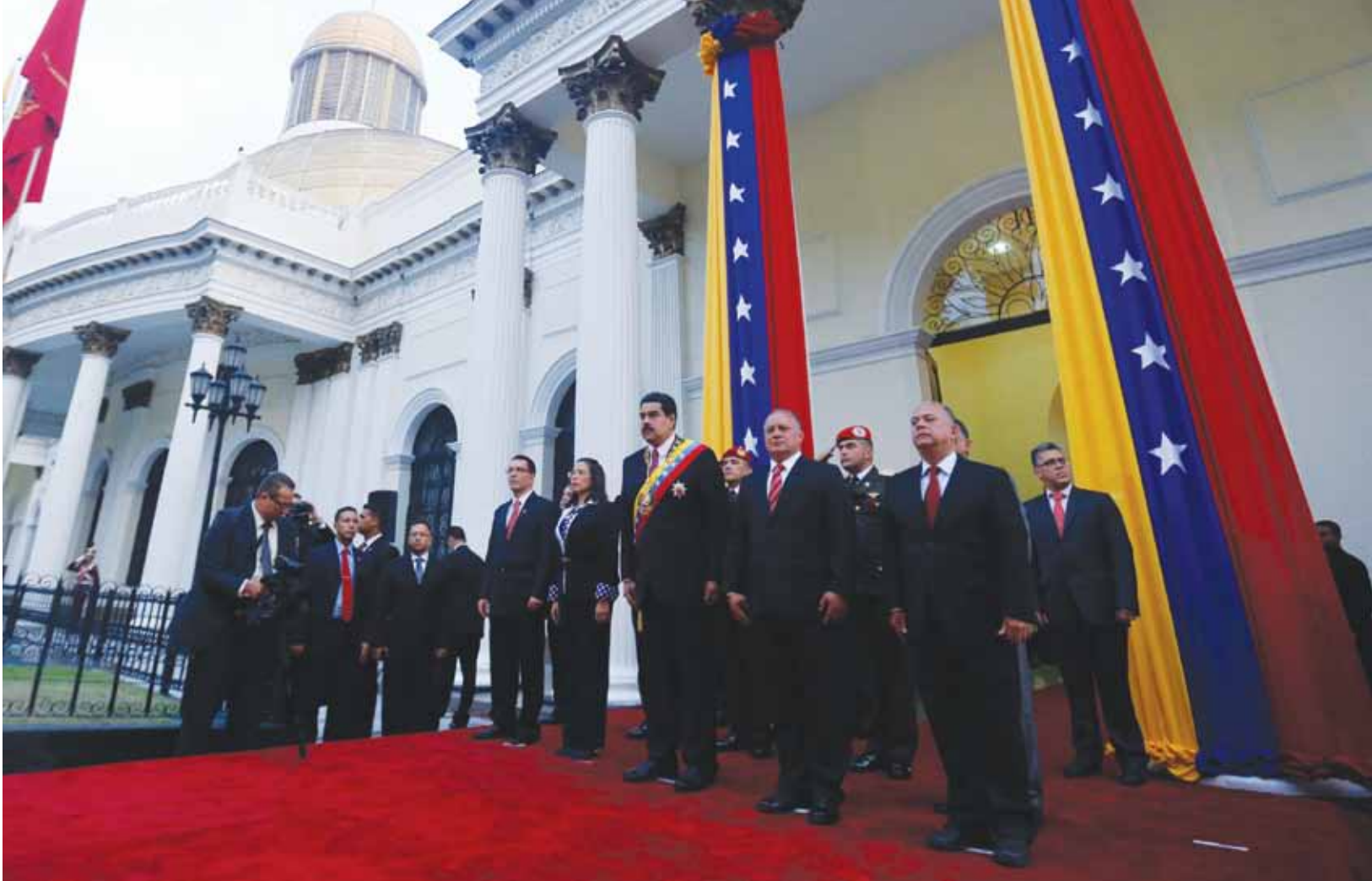
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The board of the National Assembly and other government and military powers supported President Nicolás Maduro

NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS
PRESIDENT OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CARACAS, JULY 6, 2015

A CALL FOR THE UNION OF THE PEOPLE

Dear fellow citizens, I would like to greet the entire people of Venezuela. The purpose of my presence here today before the Legislative Branch of the Homeland, the lawful Legislature of our Homeland, our National Assembly, is to call upon our people and the institutions of our country, to get the record straight from a historical perspective at a mo-

ment when our homeland, as I have been denouncing in the past weeks, is being targeted by new forms of harassment and aggression, surreptitious provocations stated in an open and public manner that may constitute a serious threat to peace in our country and our region.

I admit that with a group of experts on the Essequibo issue and geostrategic and geopolitical matters of our region, we have been delving into these

subjects, which somehow as time went by have not always been present in the public agenda of our country. If we asked younger and not so young generations about the dispossession of the Essequibo in the 19th century, about the Treaty of Paris and how the Monroe Doctrine was imposed¹ to dispossess our country from the Essequibo, maybe only a few would be able to answer some basic questions about the intricacies of this case that has been an open wound in the heart of the Homeland for more than two centuries and as of late attempts are made to use it to ruffle the dignity of the Venezuelan people.

Thus I declare to the Venezuela of the 21st century, that we uphold the ideal of Latin-American and Caribbean union. If there is something that sets us apart in 21st century Venezuela is our deep respect towards the peoples of the Caribbean and Latin America which we consider sister-nations. It is not by chance that we have been the architects and protagonists of the new system of regional organizations in the continent:

Petrocaribe [2005]

ALBA [2004]

Unasur [2007]

Celac [2011]

It is not by chance that we have actively participated in other traditional organizations, such as Caricom and the SICA; it is not by chance that we stood firm, almost obsessively, in spite of thousand provocations, until our full membership in Mercosur was approved.

As it is known by our people and the brotherly peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, we have always championed cooperation, peace, integration, union, respect, resolution of conflicts through dialogue and international law; the foreign policy priority in the Bolivarian Republic, in many cases predicated upon historic traditions of the 19th and 20th century, has been the promotion of solid foundations of understanding, respect and trust among peoples and leaders taking into account the problems and differences, but addressing them under a new model of peace diplomacy.

Recently, we talked to several prime ministers from the Caribbean and insisted on this because there is a massive campaign, brothers and sisters, a mendacious campaign to promote hate and mistrust, a negative perception about the Venezuelan character, its history, the libertarian tradition of the people of Bolivar; multi-millionaire campaigns in each one of the Caribbean countries, in Colombia, trying to instill in the collective being of these sister nations elements of mistrust, revanchism and hate that may justify, at any moment, the escalation of events against our country. And that is what I have come here to denounce, Mr. President Diosdado Cabello and members of the National Assembly.

There is a political, diplomatic, media and economic plot in our region to apply operation pincer to the Bolivarian Venezuela and thus provoke high-intensity conflicts. I came already here on March 10, one day after the President of the United States, Barack Obama, signed an

Executive Order², a preposterous decree which, in the words of the US government, declared Venezuela a danger, a threat to the security of the United States. After a protracted debate in the continent, after a heated debate in Venezuela, after mobilizing a large support of the Venezuelan people, Latin America and the Caribbean, we made President Barack Obama acknowledge that Venezuela was not a threat and is not a threat for the United States of America.³

More than 11 million Venezuelans, beyond partisan politics and social and ideological cleavages, expressed their support during March and part of April.⁴

When I attended the Summit in Panama on April 10 [7th Summit of the Americas], I carried with me your force, the force of more than 11 million compatriots. That spiritual strength of our homeland meant a lot! In just one month Venezuela achieved something that any sport commentator could have declared a world record: the President of the United States, himself, disavowed the Executive Order he had signed and diplomatic channels were opened to seek peace, respect and understanding!

We also have to acknowledge the courageous admission of President Obama and the initiative to approach us, shake hands, talk to me and from there on open a diplomatic channel that, thanks God and the Virgin, as people from Eastern Venezuela

use to say, is working very well. Brothers and sisters from the MUD and brothers and sisters from the Gran Polo Patriótico: the diplomatic channel with the United States is working very well.

Last year, in the midst of the famous *guarimbas* (street blockades and violent demonstrations), I launched a series of domestic and international peace initiatives and appointed, in my capacity as head of State, comrade Diosdado Cabello Rondón as head of a diplomatic and political team. One year later, after going through all that we went through, working with our bare hands to tackle the situation, always with the truth. One week ago, in Haiti, we officially kicked off a diplomatic process with the United States, with the participation of our minister of foreign affairs, comrade Delcy Rodríguez.

Relations with the United States are difficult, very difficult. It is an empire, beyond President Obama, the United States is an empire that seeks to rule the world, dominate us. This empire has its eyes on Venezuela's huge oil and gas wealth. Wherever oil is found they make feel their presence, their interests and their might. Besides, they have the unflinching determination to dismantle and crush the example set in Latin America and the world by the Bolivarian Revolution of the 21st century, first under the guidance of Commander Chavez and now under this humble worker who is here addressing you.

2. "I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, find that the situation in Venezuela, including the Government of Venezuela's erosion of human rights guarantees, persecution of political opponents, curtailment of press freedoms, use of violence and human rights violations and abuses in response to antigovernment protests, and arbitrary arrest and detention of antigovernment protestors, as well as the exacerbating presence of significant public corruption, constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, and I hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat".

3. On April 9th, 2015, before traveling to Panama, to attend the VII Summit of the Americas in Panama:

4. On March 18, 2015 the campaign to collect signatures to request from the president of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama, the derogation of the decree begins. On April 9th, 2015, President Nicolás Maduro receives the boxes containing more than 11 million signatures.



The main subject President Maduro talked about was the defense of the national sovereignty

National union, geo-economic interest and oil. I think nobody could deny this, geopolitical, geo-ideological, geo-strategic interest –we could tell this to planners and scholars, professor Pompeo—, in destroying this epitome of dignity and independence that gave a new momentum to Latin America and the Caribbean. Such is their goal. That is why they attack comrade Rafael Correa [President of Ecuador], leader of our new Latin America, president of the CELAC [Community of Latin-American and Caribbean States] in order to thwart his impetus, hinder his progress, mar his prestige, weaken his morale and his principles.

That explains the relentless attacks against the Bolivarian Revolution, which

according to the calculations made by the Pentagon, the CIA, the NSA [National Security Agency] would not survive, I don't remember how long, one week, one month; normally, it would not even survive December 2013!

I think that if there is something important —comrades, major generals and admirals, heads of the integral defense regions, the REDI. Please a round of applause for these men and women who work every day in the streets, military leaders of the Homeland, vice-ministers for defense; what a military leadership this Homeland has! Thank you all—, if there is something important and I said this face to face to the special envoy of

President Obama [Thomas Shannon]; our comrade Diosdado and our minister of foreign affairs conveyed this message in Haiti —and in the meetings that are planned for the next weeks—, that everyone has to acknowledge everyone else, that Venezuela should be acknowledged as a reality. A reality that is diverse. No one can continue ignoring the existence of a powerful grassroots movement, a powerful movement of masses that has taken up the flags of Bolivar and that identifies fully with the *chavism* ideals, an essential and majority force that cross cut the country; wherever you go, there you find human and cultural expressions of the beauty that we are. Nineteen elections, I said to President Obama in Panama. Just name a single political force in this world, in Europe, in Africa, in Asia that had organized 19 elections in 15 or 16 years, and then had won 18 of them by the book and that had revamped the electoral system to the point of transforming it in an object of admiration for specialist, technicians and political leaders from around the world, regardless of the ideology.

It was our diplomacy of peace and truth that succeeded in putting together a powerful national and international movement that thwarted the onslaught triggered by the decree of March 9. Now we are learning much more about the extent of the measures that were intended against Venezuela in the wake of the famous Executive Order. They were not going to distinguish between your little revolutionary red heart or some other color. You were going to be equally affected. These measures do not make distinctions, as the bombs dropped in Bagdad or

in Tripoli had no regard for human life.

When an empire uses brute force against a country, it does not make distinctions, it destroys, controls, dominates, subdues, holds down and humiliates. That is what we have averted and shall keep repelling to preserve peace and the political, social and economic life of the country.

Our goal is peace. Our victory is and must always be peace, national peace, regional peace, regional union, national union.

Now, once we managed to fend off this threat and dispel it partially, neutralize it, others forces got activated; but I think, comrades, ladies and gentlemen magistrates; attorney general, Moral Power, Electoral Power, Judiciary, ministers, political leaders of the different political parties existing in Venezuelan society, the groundwork has been laid with the complicity of important political and economic sectors from the Cooperative Republic of Guyana against Venezuela. It is a serious and dangerous scenario that must be taken down through national union.

Venezuela must keep reasserting its fair claim over the Essequibo with more strength than ever in accordance with international law and through peaceful means.

That is the reason why my first word and my first call is for national union, men and women of this Homeland. It is a matter that arouses passion. I call for a debate in the Foreign Policy Commission, in the plenary session of the National Assembly, in universities, academies. I call for a revitalizing debate on these matters.

Nobody might ever think that the leaders of our country or our people are troglodytes. Not a single drop of blood run-

ning through Venezuelan veins is tainted by the slightest intention to pillage, rob or bomb any people in this world. The blood running through our veins, is blood of liberators, men who gave their life for the freedom of other peoples! And we cannot tolerate that any one in this world accuses us of being an aggressive or imperialist people. We cannot accept that!

A plan of provocation

We know that patience and composure are of the essence to process, digest and not to gag when you read and hear the statements made against Venezuela, against our history, against our people by the sitting President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana [David Granger⁵], repulsive statements! Highly offensive for the dignity of a people of heroes, of liberators! The people of Bolivar!

A provocation operation has been staged. Behind this operation there is Exxon Mobil and the interest of the arms industry and the oil lobby, whose influence in the Pentagon and in all the imperialist plans of the United States is decisive. A provocation that we have been containing and dissipating by diplomatic means. Given my firm reaction against the Government of Guyana, where we have privileged diplomatic-political means, a campaign has been unfolding that I can hardly describe. To call a brutal campaign would be an understatement. In these attacks Venezuela is portrayed as an imperialist country that seeks to plunder and dispossess Guyana, our sister-country from the Caribbean.

-Who is behind this powerful campaign?

-Where do so many resources come from?

-Who is inciting the escalation of a political-diplomatic conflict?

-Who can profit from a confrontation between sister nations?

Guyana has a noble people. We know the people of Guyana. It is a courageous melting pot of Amerindian, Afro-descendant, Indian peoples; a fusion of noble, hardworking and peaceful people whose minds have been for decades poisoned with the worst lies to generate mistrust, fear and hate towards the Venezuelan people, so that they reject or ignore a virtuous people full of noble spirituality, a people who time and again fought for the freedom of this continent and for its own freedom. It is a campaign of extremely offensive allegations against us. I have those statements right here.

From the very first moment these statements were made they conveyed mistrust and a mendacious message, to put it mildly. Despite the indignation, pain and passion that these insults and provocative attitude cause me and cause us, I am obliged, as head of State and government of our Homeland to prudently dissipate and neutralize the scheme that is being devised and some try to perpetuate.

But I want you to know, congressmen and congresswomen, representatives of the public branches of powers present here today, that from the very moment the

5. On July 2nd, 2015, in his speech during the opening ceremony of the 36th Summit of Caricom, the president of Guyana, David Granger, requested from the members of the Community to condemn in the strongest terms, Venezuela's territorial claims:

"Guyana, even as the country approaches its 50th Independence anniversary next year, it is doing so with a "monkey on its back". That monkey being the unbearable burden of an "oppressive and obnoxious" claim to Guyana's land and sea space by Venezuela".

Reference line, dispute over the Guayana Esequiba



new Government of Guyana was installed, from the very day of Mr. David Granger's inauguration⁶, I sent the ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Georgetown [Reyna Margarita Arratia] to attempt a direct and honest dialogue. I did it once, twice and three times. I even sent to Georgetown a special presidential envoy and advisor on international affairs, Raul Li Causi, a young Venezuelan expert on Caribbean and international matters. He personally met with high-level spokespersons of the newly elected Government.

How many weeks does that government have? Five weeks. The government that currently rules our sister Cooperative Republic of Guyana came to power in the midst of critical social and political circumstances, and Exxon Mobil played a major role in its nomination, campaign and rise to power.

From the very first day, aware of the provocations, I made all the efforts, dear brothers from the Armed Force, through dialogue and truth to dispel in time and preventively what we already knew through political and intelligence information, namely that a series of actions were going to be taken against Venezuela to revive our historical claim against the dispossession of the Essequibo. A long story as you may know. Efforts should be made to ensure that more and more Venezuelans know about this dispossession and its historical evolution in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

It is not for lack of diplomatic initiatives or dialogue that the anti-Venezuelan statements began and I say "anti-

Venezuelan" because they do not target President Maduro, they target the entire nation. They attack our history and our people. Now, this provocation enjoys the resolute support and funding of oil transnational companies, of Exxon Mobil, of important lobbying powers in Washington and influential US agencies, including the Pentagon.

Faced with this threat, brothers and sisters, it is our duty as a nation to show the staunchest unity in order to send a clear message that will enable us to defeat the scheme of violence, confrontation and conflict devised against us from abroad.

Look at the way they portray us. I tried to find past references, professor and historian —I do not know if Pedro Calzadilla, president of the National Center for History, is here— and I have not found allegations of this sort since 1966 at the time when the British empire granted independence to Guyana to our days. There have been harsh statements but never derogatory and even racist like the ones recently delivered against our people.

The president of Guyana stated some days ago before the CARICOM meeting: "As Guyana approaches its 50th independence anniversary (2016), it is doing so with a monkey on its back (referring to Venezuela). It is an unbearable burden of an oppressive and obnoxious claim to Guyana's land and sea spaces (he says ignoring the Geneva Agreement). The border of Guyana with Venezuela was fixed 116 years ago when it was determined, defined, delineated and demarcated by international arbitration"; and I must add in an award called Arbitration Award of Paris of 1899 that Venezuela

has considered and still considers null and void and that was imposed through the Monroe Doctrine to our country. We reiterate that the Arbitration Award of Paris is null and void for Venezuela.

The historical claim of our Homeland must be respected. Not only he disregards this claim assuming the theories invoked in the past by the British Empire, but thereafter says: "...Any state that systematically, cynically and sedulously seeks to repudiate solemn international agreements and to undermine the security and sovereignty of another state must be condemned. Though this territorial dispute has been alive for the past 50 years, the Republic of Venezuela has become regressive and even more aggressive."

This is the campaign systematically disseminated by press, radio and television in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening in Guyana, every single day. It is a continuous campaign of intrigues and hate. Its goal is to divide us and provoke a high intensity conflict that will undermine the Caribbean and Latin-American union that our region has achieved after more than a century of strenuous efforts. To bring war to our borders and land, that is the ultimate purpose of this strategy that has been conceived by Exxon Mobil and the Pentagon and implemented by this president who is a hostage of Exxon Mobil.

It is not a small thing, deputies from the opposition! It is not a small thing! All of the sudden I see disenchanted faces.

I come here to request your support as well because:

It is the Homeland of Venezuela that is at stake.

It is peace that is at stake.

It is the sovereignty of our Homeland that belongs to all of us.

It is not a matter of elections.

It is not a matter of colors.

It is not a matter of parties.

It is a matter that concerns the entire Nation.

This is a matter that I set aside from any internal political confrontation. I set it aside from electoral confrontation. I set it aside from the differences of opinion regarding the political and economic model. This is an issue that I bring for your consideration invoking the best Venezuelan, nationalist, pacifist, humanist and patriotic sentiment.

The president of Guyana, who has been in power five weeks, attacks Venezuela every single day – and I am not going to read the statements of the foreign minister because I think that our beloved and noble people do not deserve this bitter and racist offense. Regardless of the differences that we may have, we have a noble, great and loving people. It is the people of Bolivar-:

"Though this territorial dispute has been alive for the past 50 years, the Republic of Venezuela has become regressive (he includes us all so already unites us). That country continues (he says) to threaten the development of Guyana, a CARICOM member state, both on land and at sea. Mindful of its superior wealth and military and naval strength and unmindful of the plight of the poor people of one of the world's smallest and least populated states, has resorted to intimidation and the threat of the use of force..."

This is a very serious accusation for a president to make. Venezuela has never

threatened with the use of force, and never will, either the people of Guyana or any sister country of Latin America and the Caribbean or the world. Venezuela is a peace loving country; spiritually and by doctrine, we are a pacifist nation. This is very serious because it seeks escalation. In international politics, language matters because it creates situations that can easily escalate. This speech, intoxicated with violence and hatred, belongs to an agent provocateur who knows how to use language to offend, hurt and taint.

He further adds I do not know how many insults and abuses against our people, accusing us of attacking them when, on the contrary, our country has historically privileged relations based on mutual trust between countries, leaders and peoples, accompanied by a powerful energy, trade, economic and cultural cooperation, and permanent dialogue between ministries of foreign affairs and presidents.

If there is something we have to acknowledge Commander Hugo Chavez is that as President of the Republic since 1999, he inaugurated a new era of relations with the Caribbean and, particularly, with the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, without disregarding or surrendering one millimeter of our historical grievance against the dispossession of our Homeland by the British Empire.

These attacks have been confronted through diplomatic means, however the aggression and insults against our people have only redoubled.

For this reason, I have made the decision, and I request the unanimous support from the decent, nationalist and patriotic country, from all Venezuelans, to implement a number of political and

diplomatic actions to stop this agent provocateur, and seek a path to channel and reorient political and diplomatic relations with Guyana and a process for repositioning the just and lawful claim on the Essequibo of Venezuela.

Therefore, I have decided to:

- Recall the ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Guyana for consultations.
- Reduce the size and level of our Embassy in Guyana.
- Order the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to review in its entirety the relations with the government of Guyana.

I ask for the support of the country as a whole. I ask for the support of this National Assembly!

We extend our friendship and sincere respect to all the people of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. You have in Venezuela a sister-country, a Caribbean and South-American people, a brotherly people. I am sure that if our message reaches you, it shall be understood by the heart of the humble and the people of Guyana. We have to react out of dignity to defend the fairness of our policies and peace diplomacy. We are mindful of what is hiding behind the effort to fuel this conflict.

History of an imperial looting

As you know this is a protracted conflict. There is a group of experts present here. I do not pretend to replace your knowledge or role, but our children and youth must know that the dispossession of the Essequibo has shaped our country for two centuries or more. It is certainly a legacy; an open wound inflicted by the old British

colonialism. We know it because we have suffered the dispossession. It is a painful wound because it was inflicted with the typical arrogance of empires, particularly the British empire, taking advantage of the weakness of our country during the 19th century after a war that physically ravaged the homeland and after the treason and division of the Gran Colombia, an American power that was born from the sword of the Liberator Bolivar.

The British Empire took advantage, during the entire 19th century and then in the 20th century with the Monroe Doctrine, to perform the grievous dispossession.

I would like to share briefly with you this story, knowing that the Foreign Policy Commission, the National Assembly, the different instances, the media, Ministries of Education and Culture, Communities, we all have to make an effort in the universities to disseminate this case. The history of the Essequibo, we could say, is the history of the imperialist plundering diplomacy in the world. Therefore, generation after generation, government after government, it has been a point of agreement.

In the 19th century, during governments of Liberals and Conservatives, in the 20th century from [Juan Vicente] Gómez [1908-35], Cipriano Castro [1899-1908], Isaías Medina Angarita [1941-45], Marcos Pérez Jiménez [1952-53/1953-58] and the successive governments of Acción Democrática and Copei: Raúl Leoni [AD/ 1964-69], Rómulo Betancourt [AD/1959-64], Rafael Caldera [COPEI/1969-74], Carlos Andrés Pérez [AD/First time: 1974-79 Second time 1989-93], Luis Herrera Campins [COPEI/1979-84], Rafael Caldera [COPEI/1994-99] thereafter, Jaime Lusinchi [AD/1989-93], with some point of tension

or attention, this matter has always been a national cause, a fair cause. We could see here some elements that have been presented and shall be presented in the next weeks and months before all the international organizations to which we are going to resort in this struggle for peace and sovereignty. We are going to go to all the organizations: UN, CELAC, Unasur, we have already visited some of them.

Look, this was the map of Venezuela, the United Provinces of Venezuela. This is the map made by Agustín Codazzi [An Italian military engineer, geographer and cartographer /1793-1859], 1810, which evidences the territories of the Captaincy General of Venezuela, created by mandate of the King of Spain on September 8, 1777. This is the map, the Province of Caracas and at that time the border of Venezuela was always the River Essequibo, the Guayana, The Province of Guayana Esequiba.

Our Constitutions, customarily, establish that the territory of Venezuela is composed of the territory that was part of the Captaincy General of Venezuela before the political transformations of April 19, 1810.

There is a great deal of documentation about this matter. Venezuela presented said documentation in the meetings of the Arbitration of Paris and they were not recognized simply because, as you may see now, Venezuela did not have a voice or vote in the Arbitration Award of Paris and the award was imposed, completely vitiated by imperialist interest and absolutely null and void.

Here is another map taken from historical files, the map of the Gran Colombia, Colombia, as established by Bolivar.

One sees this map and cannot avoid being moved because when we were born we were born as a power and the treason of mean oligarchies led us to be dependent and kneeled countries plundered by empires during the entire 19th and 20th centuries. For this reason, within the framework of Latin America and the Caribbean, Venezuela has to go back to being a respected power from the political, moral, economic and all points of view.

In a world of powers the weak is never respected, nobody respects the coward, those who kneel down. Everyone respects the worthy, the one who is standing, the one that is strong for its own nature and spirit.

This is a beautiful map! This is the Geographical Statistical and Historical Map of Colombia. This is a map from those worlds where people spoke English. Where did people speak English and maps were made? In London. Look how they drew Colombia. Colombia was the old United Provinces of Venezuela, of New Granada and Quito, and we always got to the Essequibo. There is no doubt about that in the establishment of Venezuela and Colombia and then when Venezuela was founded again in 1830. The United Provinces of Venezuela, both in colonial times and after independence always exercised full and unquestioned sovereignty over the territory of the Essequibo.

Look at this beauty, a huge geopolitical territory, an Atlantic, Caribbean, Amazonian, Pacific, and Central-American, South-American and Andean country. Those times will come back. They will come back, as a song in Spanish says. Those times will come back. That is the only thing that will come back! The Gran

Colombia will come back. Bolivar will come back. You will see it. We will see it, and we have to become the architects of the dream of the liberators.

Here I have the other map, the map of Agustin Codazzi, 1830. Again, here it is, Colombia, united; Colombia, the power; the Colombia of Bolivar; the Colombia of dreams; Colombia, the union of republics; and Colombia, the nation of republics. Then, 1830 was the fateful year when Sucre was murdered and Bolivar died. Then, the backstabbing that put an end to the united Colombia of Bolivar. Here it is the full exercise of our sovereignty including the Essequibo without a doubt; right Piñate? Piñate is a history professor.

There is also another map of Codazzi about Venezuela, 1840. It includes the Essequibo, 1777-1811, United Provinces of Venezuela, 1811, at least until this map of 1840, all this material has been part of a series of historic evidence that Venezuela has presented and continue to do so before international bodies that have duly chosen to hear this case.

Now, it's the British Empire attempting a takeover, occupation and maneuver over this traditionally and undoubtedly Venezuelan territory. 1835 marked the first known action to occupy this space and for what reason? The answer: a simple geopolitical reaction. Colombia had been separated, all our Nations were internally fractured and Venezuela was deeply weakened both economically and socially. José Antonio Páez's dictatorship had taken over our country and ruled with a political vision that could be paralleled to today's extreme, savage neoliberalism. During this time, our country's Liberator Army was dissolved and the brave soldiers who

MAPA DE LA GRAN COLOMBIA 1822

GEOGRAPHICAL, STATISTICAL, AND HISTORICAL MAP OF COLOMBIA.



President Maduro showed some maps like the one of la Gran Colombia (1822), where the Essequibo is part of our territory

returned from Junín and Ayacucho were deprived of the lands given to them by our Liberator, Simón Bolívar, by amoral armies who served warlords and landlords.

The British Empire saw the weakness and division in what had not too long before been a powerful nation and set its eyes on several objectives. One of those objectives was the Falkland Islands, which were defended by our Argentinian brothers in a historic battle; I am sure that this territory will be regained by the Argentinian people sooner than later via dialogue and international law. Another objective the British set their minds to thanks to the gold rush (or, more applicable today, the “oil rush”): the Orinoco and the vast riches present in the entire Guayana Esequiba area.

There are plenty of documents detailing how, since very early on, the Imperial diplomacy and power center that London was in that time’s world saw the best strategic objectives to conquer in South America. One of those objectives was to take over the Orinoco and all its mouths so that they could then conquer all the lands north of the river, up to the Meta region in Colombia. I hope that, through this national debate, we are able to properly teach, inform and educate our people on this historical sequence of events.

In historic documents, the planners that I will tell you about spoke clearly about reaching Bogota and conquering all of those lands and their respective riches.

Here I have a chronology that I find very useful. We tried to write materials that

would simplify this first exposition in order to elicit a debate that will allow us to crystallize our historic claim and successfully reach peace.

1824. This is the line of the Gran Colombia's territory as recognized by the British. Before this date, this territory was known as the United Provinces of Venezuela and then the Republic of Venezuela.

1834. The British Empire hired a naturalist geographer, Robert Schomburgk, a Prussian, German, merchant, naturalist explorer to come and study our region. Another important move during the plunder of our territory by the British. It was Schomburgk who crafted the first map and report on the Orinoco region for the Royal Geographical Society and the Colonial Office of London, which actually and in all seriousness amounted to a British Ministry of Colonies. It would take far too long to read this document here. This is the Schomburgk line, which was the first step the British Empire made to take the Essequibo's western river shore.

1840. A second map was drawn. While the first map attempted to claim 4.920 square km of Venezuelan territory as British, this second map swallows an astounding 141.930 square km. This little purple line you see here is the second line; this brown line here is the first Schomburgk line of 1835 and the purple line is the 1840 Schomburgk line.

1841. Venezuelan Minister Alejo Fortique filed a complaint to the British Government, but he was part of a weak, landlord-led oligarchic government in what was, in

all senses, a divided and weakened country. **1850.** On this year, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Venezuela signed an agreement whereby they commit to not occupy the controversial territory. I think is the first historical occupational step by the British: the signing of an agreement where we Venezuelans were not allowed to enter our home. This is a proof of the weakness of a country which was no longer really a country, as we had lost the original dream of the Liberator and our original moral compass.

1887. The British Empire publishes a new Schomburgk line, the blue one in our example, where they claimed 167.830 square km of Venezuelan land as their own.

Just so you can understand the real scope of what the British Empire was trying to take away from us, their claim extended to territories which have historically been occupied by the Venezuelan people, such as what has comprised the towns of Guasipati, Upata, El Callao, Tumeremo, all located in the current Bolívar State, and up until the shores of the Guri; that was the extension of land the British intended to take away from us in order to gain strategic control of the Orinoco region and Guayana's riches, those of our Guayana Esequiba.

1897. With the declaration of the United States via the Monroe Doctrine, the American government submitted to and approved in the US Congress a declaration warning Her Majesty and the London Government that the United States would not allow any kind of illegal territory occupation in the Venezuelan Guayana. That was enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine,

“America for the Americans”, not a favor they were doing us from the kindness of their hearts.

We have a very important material here for you. We were actually correcting it up until an hour ago, because we really want to divulge the truth about Venezuela’s history. We did this because only with the truth, which we defend fiercely, may we reach our historic goals and preserve the peace in our country; that is the most beautiful and precious commodity which we must preserve and guard: the truth.

So, let no one be foolish to think they can try and manipulate our Caribbean brothers, and even less so the Venezuelan people. Read the title we gave this book: “The Truth about the Essequibo”. With the truth everything is possible and everything is achieved. With the truth, we have always pushed through.

This book has some really great virtues, one of which is that it comprises a complete chronology, year by year, of what actions have been taken relating to the dispossession our homeland was subject to.

1895. The American Government, with a previous debate on the subject in their Congress, sent a note signed by State Secretary Richard Olney on July, 20th, on behalf of President Grover Cleveland, who had invoked the Monroe Doctrine in his annual address to Congress. The aim of the note: to urge the United Kingdom to be subject to an arbitration process regarding its attempted usurpation of the Guayana territory.

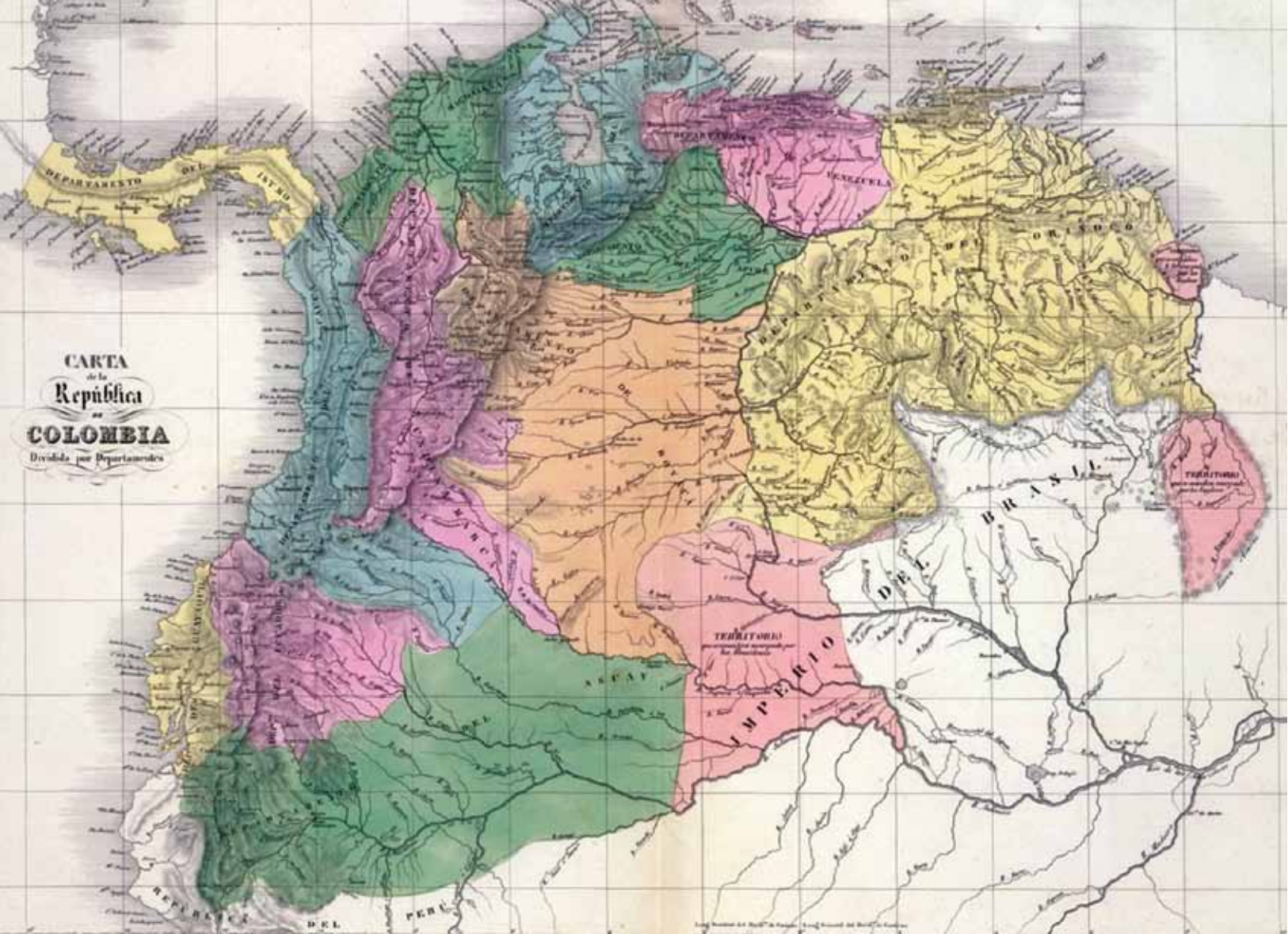
This material states, quite splendidly I think: “Secretary Olney’s note in representation of President Cleveland was seen as a 20-inch-long canon...” Such a

canon was, at the time, the world’s most powerful, if the effect it had in England was any indication.

1896. The US Congress appoints a six-member committee to determine the actual borders between British Guyana and Venezuela. Again, “America for the Americans”. The South American powers that had risen were divided and our Peoples betrayed, which resulted in the greatest state of weakness and powerlessness that any Government or people had ever suffered in these lands. The 19th century was terrible for us all, as we ended it weak, undignified and with no identity. A Congress from the United States chose a commission to set our borders for us; the rise of the United States’ empire had clearly begun.

Years later they would set their eyes in Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam, marking the beginning of their expansion all throughout the world, starting in the late 19th century and early 20th century. That commission –according to this book- included some very important people: Supreme Court Judge David Brewer; the President of the Court of Appeals Richard Alvey; a member of the New York Forum, Frederick Coudert; the President of John Hopkins University, Daniel Gillman; and the President of Cornell University, Andrew White.

The appointed Secretary of this commission was the Hispanist and expert in Latin American law Severo Mallet-Prevost. Memorize his name, because this man was a key player in the uncovering of the Paris Award fraud years later. On November 12th, 1896, the United States of America and England signed the foundations of the



Political and physical map of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela dedicated by its author, Colonel Agustin Codazzi Engineers, to the Constituent Congress of 1830. Published in Caracas, 1840

Arbitration Treaty to decide on the matter of Guyana. Venezuela was nowhere to be seen during this negotiation.

Under pressure by the US Government, the established conditions were accepted (although “imposed” would be a better term, in my opinion) and no Venezuelan was or ever came to be part of the Arbitration Court that was supposed to discuss vital issues regarding our Homeland’s territory and life.

So, there were two Englishmen, appointed by the United Kingdom, two US citizens, appointed by the US Government as Venezuela’s sole representation, and

lastly, a Russian man, notorious member of a court of sycophants and adulators of the Queen of England. The latter was then a markedly and widely known pro-British Russian. These were the five members of the commission, and all of them were extremely objective, I am sure. Venezuela was handed a treaty which was preconceived and drafted by London and Washington.

1897. On February 2nd of this year the Washington Arbitration Treaty was signed, under pressure of both the United States and Great Britain. Venezuela was left no choice but to accept the disadvan-

tageous conditions set therein. On this same year, the Venezuelan Congress ratified the Award that served as foundation of the arbitration in question.

Each jurist presented allegations with the corresponding documents and exhibits; Venezuela presented three volumes, as well as an atlas containing enough proof of our sovereign possession over the Venezuelan Guayana. Great Britain presented 7 additional volumes and an atlas of their own. From then on, there were 54 work sessions and appeals of four hours each.

1899. Between July and October of this year the Arbitration Court met in Paris. Great Britain was represented by four English counsellors and Venezuela by four US counsellors. Thirteen days of deliberation followed and, on October 3rd, 1899, a dreadful date for our Nation, the Arbitration Court made a unanimous ruling which came to be known as the Paris Arbitration Award to settle the dispute over territorial borders between the then-called United States of Venezuela and British Guyana, colonial possession of the British Empire.

It was a tremendously brief decision by Mallet-Prevost's recount, and to who said ruling bore no solid legal motivation nor arguments and was limited solely to describe the borderline agreed upon by this inane Court which began in Punta de Playa, about 43 miles east of Punta Barima and Bururuma and continued south along the Amacuro river.

This ruling effectively gave Great Britain 90% of the disputed territory (a plunder, if you ask me) claimed by our country. The ruling accepted the Orinoco river

area and 500 square miles of its mouth as Venezuelan.

The decision, they claimed, was reached in order to avoid war; this was the sole explanation on why the judges ruled without any consideration of legal or historic aspects.

1900. During Cipriano Castro's presidency, Venezuela made a formal claim regarding the Paris Award and started a long, intense, hard uphill battle of our country against the British Empire in order to reclaim what our liberators left in the Venezuelan People's hand: Guayana Esequiba.

As the 20th century passed, all of our Constitutions, even those imposed by dictators such as Juan Vicente Gómez, clearly kept the concept set in the original 1811 Constitution and recognized our territory as the one left and inherited to us after our liberators gained our independence: the one that comprised the Captaincy General of Venezuela. I have several materials covering and showing the conceptual elements, but always keeping the fundamental definition issued on July 5th, 1811.

1944. Halfway through the 20th century, the once member of the infamous Arbitration Court, Severo Mallet-Prevost, at the end of his days, wrote what came to be known as a confession proving what was by then an open secret: the illegal, improper and imperialistic way Venezuela was plundered and dispossessed of a territory of great importance for our Nation, which we conquered spilling the blood of all the Negro Primeros and humble men of this great nation in the

battlefield, was widely known in Paris, London, Washington, Upata and Caracas. No one handed us the conquered territories of the United Provinces of Venezuela and Gran Colombia on a silver platter: our liberators conquered them fighting with great effort, passion and love for our Homeland.

This material issued by those who were then young boys must have weighed in Severo Mallet-Prevost's conscience, who left it to be published "after my death"; and so it was.

Isaías Medina Angarita's government acknowledged the historian's recount.

According to Mallet-Prevost, who was behind curtains and knew all the secrets of the negotiation and imperialistic reparation:

"Even though in the ruling the Court gave Venezuela the most important sector of the controversial area from a strategic standpoint, as the Orinoco river's mouth clearly is, it was greatly unfair to Venezuela and robbed that nation of a vast and very important territory over which, in my opinion, Great Britain did not have the slightest shadow of a rightful claim".

And so, it was history. On December 10, 1948, Severo Mallet-Prevost passed away.

1949. *The American Journal of International Law* published an article on the Arbitration Award fraud and sparked a great debate in Venezuela.

The US Empire had already established itself as the ruling and hegemonic empire in Latin America and the Caribbean and was almost the ruling empire in the world, at the time at odds with the old Soviet Union.

However, this territory was controlled by governments and economic groups. They used armies and Armed Forces as occupation and domination forces. When the so-called political politicians were ineffective, they would deploy "politicians" with stars, bayonets, jails and torture, defiling the nobility of a proper, dignified military career such as Venezuela's: here, a military career is about defending our Homeland, our territorial integrity, our People, our Constitution, and to defend peace and freedom. I say this proudly as Commander in Chief: I am extremely proud of the Venezuelan Armed Forces, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the National Guard, and its militiamen and militiawomen. From my heart I thank God and our Commander Chávez as well, for the work he left us, in doctrine, in strategic concept, in discipline, in organization and in arms of our Armed Forces.

The 50's Decade. Marcos Pérez Jiménez's government tried, at a time when relations with the US government were at their most amicable, to push the subject during the Tenth Inter-American Conference of Caracas. As you must remember, the Tenth Conference of 1954 had a central topic: the ousting of Jacobo Árbenz's government. Sadly, the Guayana subject was postponed or insufficiently discussed.

The 60's Decade. At the beginning of the 60's a peculiar situation arose; it is well worth studying and combined several factors:

-The first factor. The British Empire's interest to establish a different kind of relationship with its old colonies after their massive defeat in India, peacefully

and famously spearheaded by Mahatma Gandhi. Just like yesterday's referendum in Greece, these are blows to the imperial forces that go down in history and create ripples, leading to other important historic events.

Some people believe that the Indian blow did not have a great impact. However, that event led the old British Empire, defeated in the 18th century in the United States by the 13 colonies, the first global Empire to have territorial claims in Asia, America and Africa, to rethink its international relations. It is worth noting that the 18th century's British Empire did not possess the power and global reach as today's American Empire; the British of old did not have the weaponry, the satellites, the financial prowess, and general dominion over the world the Americans have today. This is, then, the first important element: the British's interest in building new kinds of relations and replace the old possession of the metropolis, London, over the old colonies. In addition, in most of those countries there was an important presence of progressive political movements closely linked with the thinking of the British Labour Party, the historical, progressive, left-leaning party comprising the British and Irish blue collar class. These progressive political movements in the old colonies were aiming to find their own spaces to procure their autonomy and independence after the decolonization process that started after the end of World War II.

-The second factor. The 60's was the decade of the Venezuelan governments with the strongest bonds with the United States. It is no secret, as they themselves

admitted it; I'm not trying to offend any of the present company, believe me. These would be the governments of Rómulo Betancourt and Raúl Leoni. Rómulo said it after founding the Costa Rican Communist Party, during his stay in the US for the New York Pact: "Venezuela cannot be governed without the support of Fedecámaras (the Venezuelan Federation of Chambers of Commerce), of the High Clergy of the Church and of the US Embassy". He worded it differently, but that was the gist. These bonds were used by both Betancourt's and Leoni's governments to start bringing back on the table the subject of the Venezuelan Guayana Esequiba.

-The third factor. The historic uprising of Amerindian movements in Essequibo who clamored and did everything they could so that the area could be governed by Venezuela. Sadly, they were ignored and cast aside due to American and British imperial pressure for decades. However, they were very organized during the 60's, and they sought to speak directly with the Venezuelan political power.

I forgot to bring the book Elías Jaua sent to me with a note: "Here's this book, please return it". It's the autobiography of Miguel Ángel Burelli Rivas. I was not aware of it, but he was the temporary Minister of Foreign Affairs for Rómulo Betancourt when Ignacio Arcaya made a stand to defend the non-expulsion of Cuba before the OAS. It is a long, very interesting biography; I actually read all of it in a single night and until the morning due to how interesting it was. It recounts details of things only he lived during the 40's, 50's and 60's. He was part of Rómulo Betancourt's government for a few months and he goes into detail about

some elements of it. Afterwards he had a strong presence abroad during Leoni's government and then ran as candidate in '68 when Prieto won and his victory was not acknowledged. At least it's what I think; my father was a supporter of Prieto. Prieto won: they did not acknowledge the primary election he won against Gonzalo Barrios, Betancourt did not accept it and he never accepted it at all. But well, that is history.

So, delving into all of these historic books, I can say these three situations (among others) came together and had results worth evaluating; some people say one thing, others say another.

1962. Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs Marcos Falcón Briceño denounces the nullity of the Paris Arbitration Award of 1899 in a masterfully crafted and written historical report. With this denunciation by Minister Falcón Briceño during the Betancourt administration, the subject of Guayana Esequiba was finally put back in the forefront.

1963. A meeting was held from November 5th to November 7th among the governments of Great Britain, Venezuela and the then-current colonial government of British Guyana to revise the subject from our point of view. This meeting used our concepts and ideas stemming from the dispossession of our Guayana Esequiba, and the discussions were held in a diplomatic-journalistic environment.

This marked the beginning of a path of reunions and searching. The interest of the British Empire was to concede and pact on the independence of Guyana and effectively put an end to the negotiations. This took place with Venezuela's full par-

ticipation and ended with the signing of the Geneva Agreement.

1966. The Geneva Agreement was signed on February 17th, 1966, by Venezuela, Great Britain and the colonial government of British Guyana. The Agreement sets the mechanisms to start a process to deal with the historic dispute over the Essequibo between the Independent Republic of Venezuela and the Republic that resulted from the independence of British Guyana, which had its own temporary government. It was a signed agreement.

There is a historic debate on this subject. Burelli Rivas says we should have pushed for the non-acknowledgement of Guyana's independence and new Republic; others thought, conversely, that the Agreement was the most positive outcome as, after 67 years of the offensive, abusive and imperialistic Paris Award, this is an understanding settled in diplomatic terms based on international law which aims to find a fair, satisfactory and legal agreement via diplomacy.

We must put ourselves in the position of those who negotiated, talked and actively sought this out. We will probably have time in the future or during this debate to establish whether or not the Agreement could have achieved more, but what stands true is that since it was signed -on February 17th, 1966, and its later publication in the Official Gazette of April 15th, 1966-, this was an international agreement which was legally binding for Venezuela and Guyana and which set the terms and proper mechanisms to deal with the historic dispossession of the British Empire against our Venezuelan Homeland.



Maduro warned that the attack was not against him, but against the Venezuelan people, against its national sovereignty

Many other elements will surely arise during this debate, but here we have an example of a key element:

“Signed in Geneva on February 17th, 1966; on behalf of the Venezuelan government signed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ignacio Iribarren Borges; on behalf of the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, Mitchel Stewart, and the Prime Minister of the then British Guyana, Forbes Burham (who later became the leader of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana) [...] given, signed and sealed at the Federal Legislative Palace in Caracas, on April 13th, 1966, 156th year of the Independence and 108th of the Federation.

President of Congress, Luis Beltrán Prieto Figueroa.”

This agreement marks, as they say in English, “a new beginning” between a Caribbean country being born from independence as a Republic, later the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, and a historic country, leader in the independence of Latin America, our Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, our Homeland. This Agreement established a number of elements and mechanisms; firstly, it sets a concept in Article 5, paragraph 2, which reads, after the 67 year-long debate, as follows:

“No acts or activities taking place while this Agreement is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim

to territorial sovereignty in the territories of Venezuela or British Guyana or create any rights of sovereignty in those territories...”

That is how it refers to the territory: it was still British Guyana.

This is extremely important in light of International Law and of the diplomatic effort that we will reinforce in all applicable instances:

“...or create any rights of sovereignty in those territories, except in so far as such acts or activities result from any agreement reached by the Joint Commission and accepted in writing by the Government of Guyana and the Government of Venezuela. No new claim or expansion of an existing claim on territorial sovereignty over the territory in question will be validated while this agreement is in force and no claim shall be valid unless made in the Joint Commission as long as such Commission were in place.”

Here we have the mechanisms. This is why Venezuela has not accepted and will never accept Exxon Mobil or any other transnational coming to try and settle in the controversial marine and submarine territory; we cannot allow it and I will never allow it.

In defense of our Homeland and our people

Forgive me for taking so long, but I am making a very important summary of two centuries' worth of history because this subject is paramount. We have an enormous responsibility to peacefully man-

age and end all provocations while also standing for Venezuela's rights. No one will mock Venezuelan rights, we cannot allow that.

That is why Guyana's Government has violated international law and has gone so far as to renounce the Geneva Agreement, a grave matter. Up until now we could have differences with the different governments in Guyana, but there was always respect for the Geneva Agreement as basis for the peaceful, civilized and diplomatic dealing of this delicate historic dispute to which Venezuela will not relent. Let no one think that Venezuela will ever give up its fair right to regain the Essequibo; I say this to both our friends and allies as to our enemies: no one shall ever aspire to succeed in making Venezuela give up its historic rights to the Essequibo.

Now, we must always carry ourselves with balance and temperance; the most just of ideas must be correctly and justly defended, responding even-headedly to any provocation. At times, someone will try to provoke you and you will think, “What can I do?” Imagine for a second that you cannot *not* respond; that is the example Commander Chávez always used. He would say: “Nicolás, imagine you are in a given circumstance and then *this* happens... What would you do?” In the environment of States, Governments and Countries there are mechanisms to answer to that question. Humanity created International Law, an international relations system, such as the United Nations; we built a network of international agreements and that is why our country boasts a great experience in international diplomacy and peace diplomacy. It is not mere chance that the Essequibo subject

had passed down from generation to generation; surely some generations did better work than others, but all of them worked for what is ours. Our generation has to be the best one regarding the defense of our historic rights and this is not jingoism, or false nationalism, or chauvinism, no; it is Bolivarianism. We love the Caribbean Peoples; can anyone ever doubt that, if we have even bled for them in the past? Let it be known that we are not “giving away” oil to anyone, do not offend our Caribbean brothers; we sell them oil in a mutually supportive, solidary, integrational, Latin American and Caribbean way. Love, what we have is a relationship of love, of brotherhood, of the best bolivarianism and chavism.

Now, this Government of Guyana, not the People, as I firmly feel and believe, has taken the old British Empire’s wishes against Venezuela as their own. It is not Venezuela who has an aggressive or imperialistic mindset, never; it is just this sector, these brothers of ours from Guyana who have been kidnapped by Exxon Mobil, and so I say from Caracas, land of freedom and solidarity. It is this government led by Mister Granger who has been kidnapped by Exxon Mobil and is seeking to create conflict with Venezuela to harm Caribbean and Latin America unity and generate a dispute at our borders, reigniting old feuds, and abusing and renouncing the Geneva Agreement in the worst of imperialistic fashions. We could say, remembering the words of renowned political leader Lina Ron (1959-2011): “Within the margin of the Geneva Agreement, we will accept everything; outside of the Geneva Agreement, we will accept nothing.” That is our official, legal stance.

It is not easy; I received a call from General Vladimir Padrino López as well as from other officers who guard our borders and they tell me they have witnessed provocations for months. As Commander in Chief, I have given him very precise instructions on how to proceed; these are delicate subjects, as these are provocations that could escalate into far graver events and then, the world media will begin saying (and you know how this goes): “Nicolás Maduro is Saddam Hussein”. Actually, they are already saying it: in Georgetown they have published pictures of me with Hussein’s cap because I have a very similar moustache to his; they are saying that and who knows what other silliness, setting the stage with “false positives”, as someone here said earlier.

They want to make up false positives, and that is why we must work so that wisdom, diplomacy and truth prevail in the defense of our stability and our peace. We have made countless efforts. But Guyana’s government has forced us and forced me as President to take a stance and call upon our ambassador to make an integral and exhaustive revision of all of our government’s relations with Guyana.

Additionally, I will call directly and personally to the UN Secretary General, our dear friend Ban Ki-moon, to quickly set a meeting between the parties within the framework of the Geneva Agreement, so as to advance in the appointment of the next Good Officer.

I am making an effort, dear congressmen and congresswomen; again, forgive the length of my speech, but I am making an effort here as, effectively, between 1966 and 2015 there have been several important events.

1970. As a consequence of the American Empire's historic pressure against President Rafael Caldera to repudiate his presidency, minister of Foreign Affairs Arístides Calvani signed what was called and applied at the moment as the Port of Spain Protocol, in Trinidad and Tobago on June 18th, 1970, 4 years after the Geneva Agreement. This Protocol effectively froze and suspended the application of the Geneva Agreement for 12 years.

1981. A year before the expiry of the Port of Spain Protocol, President Luis Herrera Campíns officially announced to Guyana that he had no intention of renewing it and aimed to reactivate the mechanisms of the Geneva Agreement, which is what finally happened. Venezuela then proposed direct negotiation with Guyana, but Guyana declined and made three alternative proposals instead:

- Bring the subject before the United Nations' General Assembly
- Bring it before the UN Security Council
- Bring it before the International Court of Justice

1983. After Venezuela agreed to it, the case of the Essequibo was brought before the Secretary General of the United Nations in accordance with what was established in Article 4, Paragraph 2 of the Agreement, and in full compliance with Article 33 of the United Nations Charter, which sets the mechanisms for diplomatic conflict resolution all over the world. On March 30th of the same year, the current Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, took on the responsibility to search for a practical solution of the controversy and charged Diego Cordobés with studying

Venezuela's claim and to serve as a liaison between both governments.

1987. Guyana and Venezuela, after mutual agreement, decided to take the Good Offices method; this was activated two years later, beginning in 1898. Since that date we have had three Good Officers, who have historically been magistrates, law scholars or historians of very advanced age: the first, Alister McIntyre, was appointed in 1989 and sadly passed away in 1998; afterwards, another Officer was appointed on 1999, coinciding with the beginning of President Chávez's government and via mutual agreement, as must be done. Several names are proposed via a consult with the Secretary General, and after mutual agreement, Oliver Jackman was appointed; he passed away on 2007. And then, lastly, I remember from my times as minister of Foreign Affairs, we spent three years looking for a Good Officer. I remember I travelled to New York and then, on 2010, we managed to appoint an honorable, historian and Jamaican man: Professor Norman Girvan; Professor Girvan sadly passed away on April, 2014.

2015. I will personally contact the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, in order to trigger the appointment of a UN "Good Officer", based on the Geneva Agreement.

According to this Agreement, the designation of a "Good Officer" is the mean by which Guyana and the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, acknowledging International Laws, can sit around a table and reach a satisfactory, legal, and practical agreement by way the Venezue-

lan government can historically satisfy the justified claim for this dispossession.

I have also decided— and in consequence request the support of the National Assembly, Judicial Power, Moral Power and Electoral Power— to summon a high rank State commission to immediately request, by ways of diplomatic action, to the pro tempore presidency of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), president Rafael Correa, that the troika of the CELAC convenes a meeting of dialogue between the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with the participation of the pro tempore president of the CELAC.

Additionally, the actions of the Attorney General, magistrates, Ombudsman, congressmen and congresswomen, Commission of Foreign Policy and experts of our Armed Forces, ought to be put into action under the leadership of the Executive Vice-President Jorge Arreaza and the Foreign Minister, Delcy Rodriguez, to immediately undertake an intense tour, with high level State Representatives, to all of the Caribbean, Latin American and South American countries, to explain the merits of the Venezuelan cause; thus dissipating the lies that have been spread.

These are actions in the diplomatic field, from which I expect the utmost support, my expectation is the unanimous support of the National Assembly. It is not only my expectation, but also that of a whole country. Moreover – in the process of defense and surveillance of our territorial, marine and submarine spaces – an administrative decree was emitted, eminently administrative and technical in nature that established the Zones of

Integral Maritime Defense of our country; a decree that holds the mandates of our Constitution. This Constitution, if I may say so, compiles the most complete and polished doctrine, historically and constitutionally compiled as our national heritage. However, I believe— I genuinely believe and submit to the criteria of historians and constitutionalists, alike— that it is the most complete Constitution of the country. I fully recall that it was the result of a wide debate. (CS)

This interim administrative decree, has been used in a brutal campaign of manipulation in all of the countries. The media is lying. It is an interim administrative decree that holds the stamp of the Constitution; it cannot be otherwise.

The Constitution states that:

Title II Chapter I. Of the territory and other geographical spaces. Article 10: “The territory and other geographical spaces of the Republic are those which belonged to the Captaincy General of Venezuela before the political transformation began on April 19, 1810, with the modifications resulting from treaties and arbitral awards which are not null and void”.

It is a key component included in the constitutional doctrine.

Later, article 11 establishes: “The full sovereignty of the Republic is exercised on the continental and insular, lake and river spaces, territorial sea, inland, historic and vital marine areas and fall within the straight baselines taken or adopted by the Republic; soil and subsoil thereof; the continental, insular and maritime air space and the resources therein, including genetic resources, migratory species, their



"The blood running through our veins is blood of liberators, men who gave their life for the freedom of other peoples!"

derivatives and intangible components of natural causes there may be".

The article is detailed, but precise. I would say that more than detailed, this article from the 1999 Constitution is perfect.

"The insular space of the Republic comprises the archipelago of Los Monjes, Archipelago Las Aves, archipelago Los Roques, archipelago La Orchila, La Tortuga, La Blanquilla, Los Hermanos, islands of Margarita, Cubagua and Coche, archipelago Los Frailes, La Sola Island, Archipelago Los Testigos, Patos Island and Aves Island; and also the islands, islets, keys and banks located or to emerge within the territorial sea, which covers the continental shelf or within the limits of the exclusive economic zone".

These concepts are further developed.

Why did I bring up these articles—with the consent of the president, Diosdado Cabello, whom had not been asked for permission—to this speech? Because the interim administrative decree, issued by the Ministry of Defense, is marked by the Constitution, in a country that holds the law sacred, especially international law, and has enshrined in this Constitution its historical aspirations and the right to exercise its sovereignty at every level. Furthermore, at the level of century XXI, because it is an article of the twenty first century, perfectly adapted to this era.

The campaign that ensued the decree has been brutal. Thus, I consulted the plenum of the Supreme Court of Justice, through the Council of State, as to the scope of the decree, internationally manipulated, and requested a number of recommendations that were delivered today in a form of a legal opinion issued by the Supreme Court of Justice, in the midst of the battle we have been fighting. The decree was analyzed and a number of suggestions were made in order to perfect it, both nationally and internationally, to strengthen it, in other words to improve it in every possible way.

The first concept of our highest court of justice establishes a constitutional and political criterion of State, both doctrinarian and legal. As Chief of State, I was informed:

"This decree, whose purpose is not the delimitation of borders, invokes the State obligation to adopt the necessary measures in order to guarantee the independence, sovereignty, security and integrity of the geographical space, on the basis of the strategic conception of national defense ..."

National! When speaking of the national concept of defense in the vital spaces of a country, according to the limits legally established pursuant to International Law, not imperial law, with all of the countries with whom we have already established territorial, marine and submarine boundaries, and using the methods established in International Law with whom negotiations are still pending.

The campaign is brutal. With our daily hustle and bustle there is no sufficient time to fully grasp how certain conditions are being created in the world towards a great conflict involving Venezuela. This is the reason why I have insisted so much on having this work session, and I continue to insist on the need to form a national bond to defend the peace and sovereignty of our country.

The decision further recommends :

“In consequence, it is suggested that the Council of State makes recommendations to the President of the Republic so that the branches of power may jointly verify the technical content and scope of the aforementioned decree regarding the delimitation using coordinates of the Republic’s geographical space. In regards to the jurisdictions of the Zones of Integral Maritime and Insular Defense (Zodimain for its acronym in Spanish) dependent upon the Regions of Maritime and Insular Integral Defense (Redimain for its acronym in Spanish) and in the context of a periodical revision of our borders that form part of the Political Territorial Unit of the Republic, describing the democratic and social state under the rule of law and justice, that defines the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela...

Having been consulted regarding this subject of such national and regional relevance, and considering the gravity of the matter, it is pertinent that the objectives contained in the aforementioned decree be included, once the recommended technical verification has been carried out, as a decree with scope, value and effect of law in the Organic Law of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces or in another legal text that could be a Decree-law under the Enabling Law in force, that develops the principles contemplated in the preamble and in Chapters I and II of the Bolivarian Constitution...”

The Supreme Court opens new channels. This shows how, an element that has been used negatively against our country, now opens new ways to ratify our sovereignty and to perfect its defense by the Armed Forces and all the institutions.

“In light of the above considerations, we reiterate the judicious character of the regulation proposed by the Executive Branch in this matter of momentous importance to the nation, which, given its sensitive nature, could be transformed in an instrument of legal rank in order to increase full compliance with and protection of the alluded constitutional postulates in the integral development of the Nation”.

Once the result of the consultation made to the Supreme Court of Justice was known, and the proper evaluations conducted, I have decided to take all of the content of the Decree 1787 before the State Council and the Supreme Court of Justice.

In the meantime, using the constitutional doctrinarian criteria and the just claim of our country, I have decided to emit a new decree to completely replace Decree 1787; Decree 1859 secures all of

the legal and doctrinarian constitutional elements upon which our Bolivarian National Armed Forces established the Zones of Integral Defense and set their duties in all of the maritime spaces of our country, legally and validly established.

I have instructed Admiral in Chief Carmen Melendez to publish the new Decree 1859, first thing tomorrow morning and make the contents known to all.

It is a decree that in a poetical language could be considered beautiful because it has resulted from this debate. Therefore, it has been shielded in order to protect it against the oligarchic media financed by Exxon Mobil, and I say more, against the mendacious oligarchic media of Bogota.

Oligarchy and Colombian media against Venezuela

The times of abuse and influence of these oligarchies are over here in Venezuela, thanks to God, the Virgin Mary, and the Bolivarian Revolution. The President that stands here before you does not depend on any oligarchy from Bogota, or any other place of the world, that might give me orders, intimidate me or manipulate me. With or without skirts, as it was in the past.

I entertain good relations, in this case, with President Santos, and a fluid relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, despite our differences. Often times, the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs makes mistakes and falls prey to the microphone diplomacy, upon which I immediately call Delcy Rodriguez, our Foreign Minister and tell her to call her peer to remind her of our agreement: no microphone diplomacy. In case of serious doubts, the Minister of Foreign Affairs

will travel to Bogota. Should the doubts persist, I will travel to Bogota, or Cucuta; or the president can come here.

Our relationship with Colombia is predicated on respect and compliance of International Law. However, there is a relentless campaign in Bogota to try to turn President Santos against me, against Venezuela. Here I have, for instance, everything that is published daily against me, against us, in Bogota ... especially against Diosdado Cabello. My God!!! The weekly magazine *Semana*: what interests does it serve? I ask those well versed on subjects concerning Colombia: What interests do television outlets serve?

I speak to you from this place, President Santos, we must sustain the best relationship based on respect for international law, on respect between our countries, beyond the ideological differences we may have, on the role of the State and other political issues, we need to persevere on the path of direct dialogue, to dissipate any difference and favor cooperation.

Oh, my God! Someday everything that we have done and continue to do for our beloved Colombia to achieve peace, will be written; everything that has been done, everything that still remains and our disposition, my disposition to do everything in my power to attain peace in Colombia. When I say everything I can, it is not just a figure of speech.

Speaking from Venezuela, when we say everything, it is beyond the limits of what is imaginable today. What do we say in one of the army battalions? "If it is possible...it is done. If it is impossible ...we will do it". This is what we say to Colombia, if peace is feasible, we will help you to achieve it; if it is impossible, we will also

help... Hence, Minister Delcy Rodriguez, I say no to microphone diplomacy!

I ask the people in Venezuela, you who have friends in Bogota, or elsewhere in Colombia. Can you imagine that in the press, television and radio stations of Venezuela there were constant attacks against President Santos? That in Venezuela the most influential media dedicated their efforts to smear Colombia, to say things that I will not repeat here, because I love and respect Colombia very much?

What is being done in the Colombian media against Venezuela is unheard of every day, at every hour; not to mention the media at the Colombia-Venezuela border. It is a constant promotion of hatred that can only be compared to the outrageous attacks of Donald Trump against us, Mexicans and Latin-Americans, they are both similar. I believe that no one here agrees with Donald Trump, right? God forbid. Hail Mary!

Donald Trump embodies the extreme of racism and scorn against us, Latin-Americans, I believe he is repudiated unanimously by one hundred percent of all of us here, and in Latin America and the Caribbean. What Donald Trump did is what is being done, everyday, in Colombia by Semana, Caracol, RCN, and NTN24 against me, against Venezuela, against the memory of Commander Chavez, against my colleague Diosdado Cabello, sowing the seeds of hatred.... But, who will reap them?

I will not request President Santos to intervene because he will certainly answer that he has no control over the media, and it is true, he has nothing to do with it. However, as President of Venezuela, I would not react in the same manner if something like that were to occur; I

would at least caution the media against the promotion of hatred against Colombia or against any Colombian politician. It is no secret that we have many differences with president Uribe, but we do not promote hatred against him, every once in a while we take him to task, which is technically necessary due to all of the evil he does unto us, however, it is a political difference.

If I were to see former president Uribe, I would shake his hand, although I would later splash myself with holy water! I spoke extensively with former president Uribe when I was the Minister of Foreign Affairs and had to welcome him at the airport. He also had long hours of conversation, up to 7 hours, with Commander Chavez, speaking about peace in Colombia. Ex-president Uribe wanted Commander Chavez to travel to the mountains in Colombia and convince commander Marulanda to start peace talks and if he happens to accept, ex-president Uribe would show up there. This arrangement was proposed by ex-president Uribe and Commander Chavez agreed and was willing to follow along.

I have many secrets that I will not take to the grave with me, one day I am going to write them all. I have proof of all this; now, tolerate a campaign against a fellow country or against political leaders is not acceptable! In Colombia, thousands of millions of pesos are used to conspire against me, against Venezuela, to conspire against us. And the opposition should not fool itself into believing that what they are doing to me spares them in any way, since I am your president too and a citizen, as well; some of you are my acquaintances and could even be my friends. Don't be-

lieve that what is being done against me in Bogota is not against you as well. Perhaps the people acting against me respect me more than they respect you, this is only a thought though; we are allowed our own moments of deep thoughts. How wonderful it would be if we could talk again, speak about things as we used to do before, when I was a congressman!

Currently there is a vicious campaign underway. I have a very disturbing video and will play it to you; a few months back we demanded explanations from the foreign minister and the government of Colombia regarding an event that had taken place in Colombia organized by former minister of defense, Pinzon, in which Venezuela was mentioned and where spokespersons of the US establishment, officials trained at the Pentagon, former under secretaries of reactionary administrations, or leaders of the Tea Party, Giuliani spoke about the plan hatched whereby Colombian soldiers would come after Venezuela, once the peace agreement in Colombia is signed.

We requested an official explanation from the government of Colombia, because I know that these are all intrigues orchestrated in the United States. Venezuela and Colombia will never ever embark upon a binational armed conflict, it is written in the sacred books. It must be rejected; however, there are those who plot, fellow militaries, scheme, look at this Molotov cocktail, hatred campaign. Then, an Executive Order is misinterpreted, an incident is created and then, a disaster!

Who benefits from this type of policy or events in case they occur? The Venezuelan people? The Colombian people? The people of Latin-America and the Carib-

bean? The answer is no. It only benefits the enemies of our Homeland. These are situations that we need to confront with the truth, dispel with serenity, determination, diplomacy and clarity, through noble gestures in the diplomatic sphere.

I have come forth to this Assembly to discuss these issues. Where else would I go except before the sovereign representation of the popular will, before the National Assembly, plural and diverse? I have come to invoke the cause of peace and sovereignty of our country, to call upon your hearts to defend our right to peace, the right to sovereignty, to defend our Constitution, to defend our international rights, to continue advancing in the politics of integration, of union in Latin-America and the Caribbean, of good neighborliness. These are the reasons I have come forth!

I have come with an open heart, knowing that in many cases, fellows of the opposition, we have serious political differences and we sort them out. We have an appointment on December 6th, let's see who the people vote for, the people will vote and decide, and to whatever they decide, I will say "Amen". If you result victorious, very well, if we result victorious once again, the patriotic and revolutionary force, very well: respect and acknowledgement.

On January 15th, I will come forth again to render mi exam of the year 2015 and I will probably see some of the same faces that are here today and not others, of people that will be carrying out new duties, the political diatribe, the electoral diatribe, the battle of ideas, the confrontation of positions, welcome.

Sometimes, we overdo it, that is true, but we are amongst Venezuelans, Carib-

bean, passionate people that fight hard. But these topics, for the love of God, I tell you, for our people I tell you, these topics, must be taken seriously and with patriotic sentiment. Let us not mire it in cheap electoral politics, I beg of you!

Beyond our differences and the circumstances that we face here and there, the country continues its path, this country will not be stopped by anyone; it has its own dynamic and its own force.

I want to play this clip that only lasts a few minutes because it is serious; I could play the whole video where US spokespersons announce on Colombian soil that they are preparing a Colombian military force to engage in an armed conflict against Venezuela, after signing the peace agreement.

I am not naïve in politics, or in life affairs, but I have said that in spite of this scheme, our Bolivarian duty, and with your permission, our Chavista duty, is to work and aid Colombia under any circumstance to achieve peace and leave behind a war that has caused so much bloodshed during 60 years, since the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. Peace, peace, peace for Colombia is a great American cause!

It is a great Bolivarian cause, I am sure some of you do not agree, but what I am saying is just and ought to be the position of the State, the position of the country; we can deal with the rest later and thwart the plot making sure that the Colombian political class relates to Venezuela in a rational fashion and with respect. Guaranteeing that no one touches Venezuela, ever; the Colombian people will also take care of that, if necessary.

In the clip we see a public broadcast with the presence of officers from the Ministry

of Defense, two US spokespersons, a key woman from the Pentagon and the NSA—National Security Agency—; these are people from the highest levels that provide counsel from the United States and might go back to positions of relevance at any given moment. Mr. Giuliani, was also present, they call them as advisors in a post - conflict era and the only thing they target is Venezuela. So, Mrs. Foreign minister of Colombia, these are topics that must be clarified in a direct fashion avoiding microphone diplomacy. We need to raise awareness, sound the alarm and defend our Homeland; and guarantee peace as the basic condition for development.

Enabling Law for peace and sovereignty

Lastly, comrade Diosdado Cabello, president of the National Assembly, congressmen, congresswomen, magistrates, members of the Electoral branch, senior State officials, leaders of the opposition and of the Great Patriotic Pole; after the recommendation from the Supreme Court of Justice and the analysis by the State Council, and faced with these multiple provocations and attempts to set the stage to impede Venezuela's progress, to hurdle progress of the Caribbean and Latin-American union, to get their hands on our soil, I have decided to promulgate an enabling law to create an institutional presidential commission of the Venezuelan state whose responsibility will be to handle all our border affairs, on top of the Essequibo dispute, pending with our neighboring countries of Latin-America and the Caribbean.

This Enabling Law shall therefore establish a single State Commission at the



There was a great empathy with the Venezuelan President in the National Assembly

Presidential level to take care of all border issues, and it will have a technical secretariat. It will be headed by the executive vice-president, comrade Jorge Arreaza, and its members will include the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Defense, Office of the Presidency of the Republic, Attorney General, president of the Supreme Court of Justice and a representative appointed by the National Assembly, in order to ensure a representation of all the branches of power.

This commission will foster constructive bilateral relations and engage in negotiations that allow the solution of all the issues in accordance with the international law.

Hence, I will proceed immediately, with your permission, Mr. President of the National Assembly, using the enabling powers for the defense of our peace and sovereignty, approved by the Assembly in March after the threatening Executive Order of President Obama against Venezuela. The Enabling Law was approved until

December 31st, and this is the first law in defense of the sovereignty and peace of our country that I am about to sign in the name of the people of Venezuela the Enabling Law for peace and sovereignty, to be effective immediately.

Thus, we can pursue a number of national, popular, State and international actions to preserve peace in our country, protect and defend our just and historic claim for the Esequibo, and protect the international negotiations in the framework of international law. We must equally protect the Latin-American and Caribbean union, since our region and our country must continue paving the way of a new Latin-American and Caribbean power, a power of peace that will heal old wounds of colonialism. Do not allow today's empires to harm us again with intrigues, hatred and least of all, war.

Peace, peace, peace will be our final destination, will be our life! And will also be our victory!

