



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on May 16, 2022

## AOC, Progressives Call on Biden to End Sanctions on Venezuela's Maduro

Eighteen “progressive” members of Congress recently addressed a letter to Joe Biden calling on him to repeal sanctions against the socialist regime of Venezuela headed by Nicola Maduro.

The [letter](#) is the work of Representatives [Raul Grijalva](#) (D-Ariz.) and Jesus Garcia (D-Ill.) and is co-signed by Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.), and Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), among others. The letter insisted that the White House should continue to pursue dialog with the Maduro regime and to end the sanctions that have been placed on it.



Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AP Images)

“Nicolás Maduro and his allies bear much responsibility for the humanitarian and political crisis improve the situation in Venezuela. But the policies pursued under the Trump administration not only failed to improve the situation in Venezuela, they significantly exacerbated it,” the Democrats write. “It is clear that broad sanctions have failed to achieve their aims. In light of this, and the dire human costs incurred, we urge you to lift all U.S. financial and sectoral sanctions that exacerbate the humanitarian situation, though without hindering or delaying the urgent action needed to transition the U.S. economy off of fossil fuels,” they add.

Despite the arguments made by Grijalva and his colleagues, the sanctions placed by the Trump administration in August 2019 came after Venezuela’s economic collapse had already taken place. That includes during the period 2014-2018, when food shortages were so severe, the government used ID-based locks and fingerprint scanners to ration food.

Moreover, the ongoing health crisis in the Latin American nation has left many citizens without access to private or public healthcare.

In their letter to Biden, Democrats largely used the talking points of failed perennial presidential candidate and “opposition” leader Henrique Capriles Radonski in a radio interview in March. Capriles is one of the top “opposition” leaders who have called for an end to sanctions against Maduro.

In April, a group of these opposition figures sent a letter to Biden likewise asking him to end the sanctions.

According to a [recent poll](#), nearly 80 percent of Venezuela’s population believes the opposition to be sellouts who are doing nothing to stop the Maduro regime.

Maduro himself has repeatedly made the arguments currently being echoed by Democrats, casting all blame for his country’s economic crisis on the “economic war” waged by the United States.



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In March, amid high gas prices nationwide, Biden sent a delegation to Venezuela to talk about a possible oil deal with Maduro, but the move received such universal pushback that the White House shelved the idea. Polling suggests such maneuverings are causing Hispanic voters to switch their support to the Republican Party. A recent *Wall Street Journal* poll [showed](#) that Republicans now have a nine-point national lead among Hispanic voters.

Christian Caruzo of Breitbart News [notes](#) the suppression of civil liberties in Venezuela:

Anyone in Venezuela who dares to express support for sanctions against the Maduro regime can be prosecuted for treason. If you make a joke on social media that ends up offending the regime's authorities, you will be prosecuted for "hate speech" and forced to record a public apology.

Free media in Venezuela is non-existent, with most private media outlets self-censoring in favor of their continued survival. Those that do not comply are sued into oblivion by skewed trials and their infrastructure seized by socialist party members. The Venezuelan regime, which has a near-monopoly on Venezuela's internet access, continues to block access to foreign and independent media outlets and forces private internet service providers to comply with the censorship lest they lose their operating licenses.

Leftist leaders in South America want to ease relations with the Maduro regime. Alberto Fernández, the president of Argentina, has said he intends to re-establish diplomatic ties with the Maduro regime after his predecessor, Mauricio Macri, broke relationships with Venezuela 2019.

Gustavo Petro, the leftist running for president of Colombia, has said that if he wins, he will re-establish diplomatic ties with Maduro.

Meanwhile, the foreign policy establishment that controls both parties in Washington is pushing to name Russia a state sponsor of terrorism. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) on Sunday [called on Joe Biden](#) to designate Russia a "state sponsor of terrorism," a move that would remove sovereign immunity protections that presently shield the country from being sued for civil damages.

"I think it's a good idea, and I would support that," he told reporters during a press call from Stockholm. "The president could do it on his own, and I would urge him to do it."



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