



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on February 20, 2019

President Trump Tells Venezuelan Americans in Miami: “Socialism Is Dying”

Speaking at the International University Ocean Bank Convocation Center in Miami on February 18, President Trump told an audience of émigrés from Venezuela: “In Venezuela and across the Western Hemisphere, socialism is dying, and liberty, prosperity, and democracy are being reborn.”

Trump was introduced by his wife, Melania, who is herself an émigré from the former communist Yugoslav republic of Slovenia. The first lady told the crowd: “I’m proud to be here with you in the United States of America as your First Lady. Many of you in the room know what it feels like to be blessed with freedom after living under the oppression of socialism and communism. In Venezuela, the people are on the brink of reclaiming their own liberty.”

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Trump’s speech came at a time when opponents of Venezuela’s President Nicolás Maduro are attempting to remove the Marxist strongman from the presidency and replace him with Juan Guaidó, the president of the country’s National Assembly. On January 23, the president issued a statement of support for Guaidó that read, in part:

Today, I am officially recognizing the President of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, as the Interim President of Venezuela. In its role as the only legitimate branch of government duly elected by the Venezuelan people, the National Assembly invoked the country’s constitution to declare Nicolás Maduro illegitimate, and the office of the presidency therefore vacant.

Though Guaidó himself is a socialist and may, in fact, try to use new socialist tactics to save the country, some analysts are counting on Guaidó being in office for only a short time — until elections are held — and then being replaced by someone who will work to undo socialist damages.

During a February 3 interview on *Face the Nation*, Trump did not rule out U.S. military intervention in Venezuela, stating that “it’s an option,” but fortunately, there has been no further indication that such interventionism is in the works. The United States has, instead, placed sanctions on Venezuela’s state-owned oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PdVSA). Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and national security advisor John Bolton announced the sanctions on January 28, and said any purchases of Venezuelan oil by U.S. entities would flow into blocked accounts and would be released only to the legitimate leaders of Venezuela, presumably a new government led by Guaidó.





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During his Miami talk, Trump stated:

Today, more than 50 countries around the world now recognize the rightful government of Venezuela. And the Venezuelan people have spoken, and the world has heard their beautiful voice. They are turning the page on socialism, turning the page on dictatorship, and there will be no going back.

Trump also appealed to both the civilian and military leaders who are still supporting Maduro to end their support, saying:

So today, I ask every member of the Maduro regime: End this nightmare of poverty, hunger, and death for your people. Let your people go. Set your country free.

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