

President Nicolas Maduro: Dear constituent members, President of the Citizen Authority, Prosecutor General of the Republic, Tarek William Saab; members of the citizen authority, Comptroller General, People's Attorney, President of the Judicial Authority and the Supreme Court of Justice, Dr. Maikel Moreno and all the Magistrates of the Republic; Dr. Tibisay Lucena, President of the Electoral Authority and all the rectors of the National Electoral Council, Comrade Tareck El Aissami, Executive Vice-President; Government Vice-Presidents present, Ministers.

Comrades of the Joint Military High Command, General in Chief Vladimir Padrino, Admiral in Chief Remigio Ceballos; commanders of the Army, the Navy, the Aviation, the Bolivarian National Guard, the Bolivarian National Militia, Chief of Staff of the CEO, Head of the REDI capital region, dear National Armed Forces. We are going to have a meeting filled with emotion and a lot of moral and spiritual strength, dear brothers. Ambassadors, charge d'Affaires of the countries accredited in Venezuela.

I want to thank all the Heads of State and Government from around the world, from Africa, from Asia, from Latin America, from the Caribbean and beyond for their more than 90 letters, telegrams, comunicués, calls I have received from them; these are examples of the International Community's affection, the true International Community that is the immense sum of the nations and peoples of the world, thanks to our brothers and sisters of the world.

Dear first combatant, Cilia Flores, welcome, constituent members, legitimate state Governors, thank you for all your effort, thanks for the extraordinary results, a collective leadership forged by Commander Chavez and it can be seen far and wide. Mayor of Caracas, comrade Erika Farias Peña.

I come here to present my credentials as President-elect, in free elections on Sunday, May 20th, for the 2019-2025 period, it was this National Constituent Assembly that called to consecutively and impeccably carry out the constitutional electoral cycle. It was the Constituent Assembly in exercise and use of its sovereign, plenipotentiary, unique powers, as mandated by the jurisprudence, historical practice and the clear and express constitutional mandate, in use of those powers, which raised the flags of peace and democracy, it was the Constituent Assembly that assumed and understood very early, on August 4th, 2017, just established, it was the Constituent Assembly that understood the need to electorally renew the municipal and regional authorities and the central Executive Authority of the country. So we must recognize it as such all Venezuelans, it is the National Constituent Assembly which assumes the national initiative, to convene the elections of state governors that October 15th and surprises the country with its convocation, promoting that peace must go beyond, that peace must be political, that peace must be social, that peace must include empowering the people to make their decisions and is the Constituent Assembly the builder of peace. This Constituent Assembly called to build peace, which convened the elections of the 23 States of the country; as a mandate of the Constitution, we can

recognize the total and absolute success of such convocation, and a few days after the elections of October 15th, we saw all the candidates elected as state governors by the people came to pay tribute, to subordinate themselves to the National Constituent Assembly and to take an oath for their new mandate - first of all before the National Constituent Assembly.

We are making history, all this is new history, because in Venezuela there is a democratic, deep, peaceful, constitutional revolution; there is a revolution in the constituent stage, creating and channeling the forces of the Nation through political, democratic, and peaceful means. Almost immediately the Constituent Assembly took the next step of constitutional renewal of the country's public authorities, in use of its sovereign and plenipotentiary, indisputable powers, covering the entire national territory and all areas of social, political, institutional life of the country. Immediately after, in the month of October, the National Constituent Assembly set a date for the election of the mayors of the 335 Municipalities of the country, December 10th, the end of 2017, and immediately after the Electoral Authority as a constituted power, demonstrating a great logistical, organizational capacity, as well as great efficiency, arranged to organize the elections of the 335 Municipalities of the country, covering all the national territory of the 23 States, plus the Libertador Municipality of Caracas.

And so the date was set; our people joint the free, democratic, open, peaceful, participatory electoral campaign and on December 10th they went to the polling stations - 14,000 electoral centers, 34,000 polling stations -, and there they democratically chose those who today are the mayors of the 335 Municipalities of our beloved homeland.

And then, all mayors of the 335 Municipalities of the country, elected in those elections, came as mandated - by the plenipotentiary powers of this National Constituent Assembly - to swear in and assume their positions before this Power of the Republic, and to subordinate their offices to the National Constituent Assembly, and thus in the first week after the elections, they were invested by this National Constituent Assembly, and the 335 mayors of the country took office. At that time a debate was opened, because the Constitution requires elections every six years, and in the electoral timetable was set in 2018 for the presidential election, and I said it over and over again, come rain or shine in Venezuela, in 2018, there will be presidential elections; I said it hundreds of times in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017.

Since a section of the extremist Venezuelan right wing, of the extremist opposition, wanted the presidential elections to be held in advanced in 2014, 2015, 2016 and took the streets in 2016, 2017, with a sole slogan: Presidential elections now ...! And there were many statements by the leaders of that conspiracy right, nowadays extinct, where they say "elections now", and I said at the time "yes, elections, but when it corresponds, and if you want elections in 2018 let's organize them for January the first" I said, but it is in 2018, it is the mandate and the constitutional obligation. And as I explained to the Electoral Authority last Tuesday, I have already explained it extensively, I will not repeat it,

although it is always necessary to reiterate a new idea; I called for continuity, for the continuation of the process of dialogue for peace that I had installed since April 2014, which due to the opposition had been suspended at various times, and that I persevered, and reinstalled in 2015, and then in November 2016, we reinstalled it in 2017 on several occasions and fortunately in December of 2017 with the help of the President of the Dominican Republic, Danilo Medina and the support, facilitation, accompaniment of the former Spanish President Rodriguez Zapatero, we reinstalled the process in the Dominican Republic . And so in the Dominican Republic in December, intense negotiations were carried out to reach agreed-upon electoral guarantees plan, to convene on a agreed date the presidential elections, I opened the floodgates, I called them, I sought international support and I achieved it , I sat them down to talk in the Dominican Republic, there I appointed Dr. Jorge Rodriguez, then mayor of Caracas, now vice-president, at that time he was finishing his period as Caracas mayor but always as a revolutionary leader that he is; from the Caracas Mayor's Office he was in charge of all the processes of dialogue, now as Minister and Vice-President of Government, he is a firsthand witness and comrade Elias Jagua also, and the President of the Constituent Assembly, and the national emblem ambassador Roy Chaderton, our flagship - as I call him -, the flagship of Bolivarian diplomacy, although now he is leaving his beard and looks like Karl Marx, he says he is Marxist. They are exceptional witnesses of how an intense political negotiation took place and the agreed bases of electoral guarantees were established and a consensus date of April 22nd of this year was established for the presidential elections, when I was informed by the presidents and former president, when I was informed by the entire delegation of this agreement, I confess that it was one of the happiest days of recent months, to reach an agreement with the opposition to compete face to face, measure ourselves, like someone who goes for a world championship and is prepared, trained, and wants the opponent to come with all his strength. A competition to death, with no advantages. That's how I wanted that April 22nd and I felt happy to go with all our strength, to go with all our love, to go with all our people to that political, electoral, peaceful, civic, republican battle.

But the joy did not last so long, a call from Bogota, from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to the head of the opposition delegation Julio Borges, minutes before the agreement was signed, thwarted the peace, dialogue, concord and elections agreement in Venezuela. You must know this, civilians and military, the search for peace has cost effort, and has always had the permanent conspiracy of the U.S. Empire and the Colombian oligarchy.

In any case, I took the agreement and signed it, handed it over to the National Electoral Council and said: "This is the consensus basis that I accept to go to an election." Conversation rounds and negotiations with different political sectors were reopened and a new date was proposed, May 20th. And on May 20th, when it was already agreed, a group of those who had agreed on the date was then brutally pressured by former

Chargé d'Affaires in Venezuela, Todd Robinson, who is taking his plane to the United States at this time...

With brutal, undue, immoral pressures, there were those like Henry Ramos Allup, my great friend Henry Ramos Allup, who preferred the U.S. visa than his Democratic Action party and the presidential candidacy. So he told his friends: "I prefer the U.S. visa than an election where I'm going to lose ..." He told them so, he sacrificed his governors, his regional leaders, his grassroots leaders who surely today would be enjoying some victories, because they also have what it takes to win elections in States, in Municipalities, and they would be counting on a good number of representatives to the Legislative Councils, in Tachira, in Nueva Esparta, in Anzoategui, in Merida, in the plains, for example. But no, the normal political life of his party, of his people, was not worth it, his petty personal interests, his U.S. visa and his business in Miami was not worth it. We, a group of political leaders, were summoned to sign electoral guarantees, the definitive date of May 20th was established by the National Constituent Assembly, and we already know what happened, our people voted, and even though the process faced some troubles, today we can say Venezuela has had free, fair, necessary, legal, constitutional, and legitimate elections.

And that is why I have come to present my credentials, issued by people's vote and issued by the National Electoral Council, as President-elect for the 2019-2025 period, and I have received a Constituent Decree of faithful compliance, so that I continue in the exercise of the presidency and on January 10th of next year proceed to take my oath, for the new period for which the people has given me its power, it has given me its confidence, it has given me its vote.

So I shall do so and here we shall continue in battle, in struggle, together with the people, always with the people, with the truth, always with the truth and with lots of love.

I ask God to bless me, I ask God to protect me, I ask for the blessings of the people.

Amen. And God bless our people.

We need a lot of spiritual strength from this earth, from our ancestors, we need all the strength of history, we need all the strength of God, we need all the strength of the people, we need all the strength of the civic-military republican union, solid, consolidated, seamless, looking to the future, we need that, we need to rejuvenate all our energies, - as I feel and look in that portrait that a group of Constituent members brought me as a gift from Merida, thanks beautiful Merida. May God bless Merida!

And I also come with the spirit of the future, the construction of the new, comrades, compatriots who are listening to me, Venezuela needs a new beginning in revolution, with revolution and to make revolution, listen well, listen well to the clamor of a people and also its silence, learn to listen to the clamor and the silence of the people, who have experienced hardships, with patience, with conscience, who have faced difficulties of economic, electric, political, psychological warfare from different signs,

of permanent conspiracies; listen carefully, I have carefully listened to this people, in these 25 days of intense campaign where I traveled the country, I could see and I could hear the people, their words, their looks and see their smiles, also their uncertainties and their hopes. I was convinced of the need for a new beginning of the Bolivarian Revolution.

To rebuild everything with the greatest renewing spirit, that only teachers like Hugo Chavez and the people itself could teach us, the permanent revolution that Chavez commanded, a revolution that knows how to handle the whip of the imperialist enemy, that does not fall asleep and is able to permanently reinvent itself. This is not a problem of Maduro, it would be very simple if it were the problem of a man, if it were my problem, or only of my concern. It is a stupid reductionism to believe that it is a problem of Nicolas Maduro. It is a problem of a whole country that has the right to live, to dream and to a splendid future. It is a problem that affects everyone, but above all, being before you - leaders, constituent power of the country -, it is a problem of the revolutionaries of this country, of millions and *millonas* (Spanish feminine adjective for million) of revolutionaries.

I do not know what Maria Leon said, what the Royal Academy of the Language has said, if you can say *millonas*. What does Diosdado say? Can we? Mario Silva, do you agree? Approved! Millions and *millonas*? What does Earle Herrera say about it? Expert in languages, linguistics, sorry. Can or can we not? Professor, shall we add it to the dictionary? Every time I say millions I feel like it because it is discriminatory, isn't it?

Well, beyond the comment, it's like that. What shall we do? How shall we do it? And what result shall we have in our effort? The higher the position, the more political and moral responsibility it shall represent, and even though you have no position or office, but you love this country from your home, from your work, from your family, then the commitment is the same; as the people told me: It's not you Maduro, It is all of us.

What a beautiful people we have. What a great people we have!

In Venezuela, the people is the vanguard, as a friend of mine says. For a long time, in Venezuela the people is the vanguard, we have to write that and develop it because in Venezuela the people goes forward with the ideas, with the work, with the example, with the sacrifice, with the smile, with the optimism, the people goes ahead of all of us, in that I am dogmatic, I do not believe that any of us goes ahead of the people, I believe so. Here, our beautiful people goes ahead and I am not sublimating or mystifying it. It is a Venezuelan reality because it is a people, it is the glorious people of the liberators, it is also the people who captured, who received the spiritual sowing of our commander Chavez. If something was forged by our beloved commander, it was the consciousness in the people, the strategic vision, the historical vision, the ability to face everything with courage.

I have listened very carefully and the first thing I ask for is a transformation of the leadership of the revolution. We are not doing enough, we are not doing well, there are good things that we do but it

does not mean that we are doing them well and we are not doing enough. Let's not lie to ourselves and to anyone in this country.

It takes a great deep rectification, it takes a deep relearning, we need to do things again, better. You have to do things beyond the slogan, beyond the applause. We are not doing things right, and we have to change this country! But we have to start with us.

And I want to say it "*despacito*" [*slowly* -as the name of the song]. And I'm not talking only for talk or because I wanted to deliver a speech here today. No. I am opening my soul. I think there has been no President in the history of this country subjected to such insistent imperialist persecution, to such imperialist attacks and threats.

Certainly, our Commander Chavez was subjected, indeed. But, this times of imperialist besiege and world imperialist persecution against the Revolution's leadership that I have gone and still going through. Why do they do that to me? Why do they do that to us? Because of our loyalty; what if Maduro would not be loyal to the people and its cause; what if we wouldn't be loyal to this cause, we should be appearing in the New York Times front page with a big smile or should be in Bogota embracing and kissing [Pres.] Santos, just like some have gone to hug and kiss Santos. How disgusting! Right? Yuck! As children say.

Can you imagine joining the Bogota oligarchy in order to betray the Homeland's cause? That can't even be called treason. It is unspeakable!

So, comrades, if my words delivered here before the National Constituent Assembly today can serve for something, it is for calling you all to renew it all and renew us, and do the new things good and better, I call for improving the quality of our work and devote our sacrifice, our true time, to get the expected results of each task given to ministers and comrades, I call for getting quality outcomes that address and solve problems.

There are no excuses. We count on all the political power of this country, we have all governorships and mayoralties; we won all 23 state legislatures; the National Constituent Assembly, and the Presidency of the Republic.

Comrades, we cannot excuse us anymore for addressing the problems of the people.

And I establish six lines of tactic actions that lead to immediate achievements that we must meet. Comrades, state governors, I have a great faith in you and in the collective leadership that we represent.

Mayors, I have a great faith in you in order to make a daily, permanent and in the street government. For instance, as I was telling to Erika Farias the other day: To be at 7 am in one parish, at noon in another; at 6pm in another, and at 10 pm in another one. In this way you can realize how we are building a superior awareness in our people; how we are deepening its organization; how we are addressing its problems. Only the people can save the people!

But, if we don't look for the people, who's going to save the people? Superman? *Super-Nico*? There is no Super-Nico, nor is there Superman.

There is a *super-people*! It does exist, but we must look for it, motivate it, organize it and support it. Comrades, the *super-people* must be supported.

And I have already started to work, because that is the mandate I have; comrades international observers that still remain in Venezuela, dear observer Navarro from our sisterly Chile, I can see you. I salute you all delegations that still are present in Venezuela.

The air conditioner is not working properly, is it? This is Omar Barboza's fault. They have deteriorated this Federal Legislative Palace. And I apologize for speaking about myself, I never do so, but between Nicolas Maduro and Cilia Flores -because I was President of the National Assembly for one year and a half and later Cilia was in that position for four years and a half- later came Diosdado -who lasted almost 15 years- all of us put this Federal Legislative Palace, which is a Nation's cultural heritage and architectural heritage, in excellent and beautiful conditions.

See how Ramos Allup, Omar Barboza and the fugitive from justice, Julio Borges, have destroyed it. "The *Chaguaramo* palms are falling!" as the President of the Constituent Assembly told me a few minutes ago. The air conditioner that had always worked here and always was very cold. Look how we are sweating as if we were in a gym. The toilets are abandoned and all the facilities as well. I have told the President of the Constituent Assembly that submits a request -which is already elaborated- in order to allocate the resources and undertake a full restoration of the Federal Legislative Palace.

A promptly investment, because this belongs to all Venezuelans and the opposition-bourgeoisie National Assembly has neglected and destroyed it, thus turning it, once more, into a shack. So, it's getting hot in here. International photographers are enjoying all these gestures, is likely that the BBC headline is to be "Maduro sweats buckets" or "sweats like a pig"; photographers are laughing, they do, but you know that it is true.

And I tell Vice-President, Ministers, comrades, all of you, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela -which has broken the percentage and voting record- congratulations comrades!

Despite all the smear campaigns against the United Socialist Party of Venezuela, congratulations! The great performance by the *Somos Venezuela* Movement -which has born with a good start- and the Grand Patriotic Pole: The Communist Party of Venezuela, Homeland for All Party, *Podemos*, MEP, UPV, *Tupamaro*, Independents for Change, Evangelist Movement ORA, Alliance for Change -I already named them all, right? Congratulations! The same to all social movements, businesspersons, middle class, working class, sexual diversity movement, women, youth and all of you. Congratulations!

And when I say this, is because I truly aspire, brothers and sisters, in the light of my own life and duties, I aspire that all of us renew our energy and spirit, thus changing our working methods and building a new effective and efficient popular government system.

I aspire that we all -constituent members, comrades, state governors, mayors- assume our duties with a renewed spirit, thus realizing every plan, mission and grand mission under a new, comprehensive, effective and problem-solving-oriented approach, that is, we're going to attack the same objective from different sides.

As Minister Padrino says, and I'm going to quote him: An attack from different directions of approximation -municipal, regional, sectoral and national; in order to promote what the Bolivarian Revolution did during its first stage: A resurgence of national awareness, overcoming of poverty and misery and distribution of the increasing wealth, that is, real, social and comprehensive development of the country.

Or does the Revolution, although the coups d'état on 2001 to 2004, didn't it? It isn't true that during the glorious period as from 2005 to 2012, the Revolution achieved the highest standards on education, culture, equality and investment? Later the storms came following the passing of our Commander, as expected. Amidst the storm we defended the rights of the people, but undoubtedly, the wounds of an inclement warfare that I have denounced since the beginning still remain, and we heal them but sometimes they ooze again.

We need to progress towards a stable and solid country; towards a profound process of social security based on the creation of real wealth; towards an economic stability of growth, a new state of prosperity. This is the direction that we should progress to.

I have already started to work in this new spirit and I ask for help, I ask all Venezuela for help; help and accompaniment. It is enough that someone -over here, over there- intends to sabotage the path of Venezuela.

It is like as we are all in a rowing boat and, instead of row timed all together, there will be ones who don't row and others who row backwards. What could happen to that boat? It should enter into a whirlpool, what is what has wanted the U.S. imperialism in order to dominate our country: Place our country into a whirlpool of contradictions, insurmountable problems, hopelessness and uncertainty to break the country and its institutions.

That is the true reason. Let's row all together. I ask the support of the entire people of Venezuela: Those who vote for me, those who vote for other candidates and those who didn't vote. I call for national unity, in order to row all together, thus bringing this boat to superior levels of tranquillity, peace, social happiness and real economic recovery.

And I already started. As I said, I have started with a grand dialogue. I have scheduled political, cultural and social dialogues. I want to listen to the intellectuals of our country, those who write and think. I want to listen to them in order to check how the national creativity and intelligence is.

I want to listen to the politicians from the opposition. I am able to listen to you all, I do indeed, and we need it.

I want to listen to the business sectors. Here you are a well experienced President, and I know very well all business sectors of the country, and I'm sure that they cannot lie to me and I can reach out them for a new beginning for all businessperson of the country; small, medium and large businesspersons, including all those from international companies.

Yesterday, the Vice-President for Communication and Culture, Dr. Jorge Rodriguez, had a meeting with the European Union Ambassadors in Venezuela, a very cordial meeting and, among other topics, they presented him some problems of the European companies in Venezuela.

I immediately ordered to Minister Simon Zerpa and Vice-minister Yvan Gil, that they convene all European companies to come to Venezuela through their members of the Board, for a working meeting in order to solve the problems they have and also bring new investments and, if some debts exists, we shall turn them into investment for growth.

I would like to meet -one at a time- with the presidents and directors of the European companies that come, and also with those from Asia, China, Russia, India, Belarus, Iran, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well. I want to meet with domestic and international companies.

On the other hand, I also want to meet in political terms. Yesterday, I welcomed the presidential candidate Javier Bertucci and we held an interesting talk. I delved into his life -Jorge and Cilia were with us in the meeting- I inquired on when he had started his pastoral evangelical leadership.

One trend of Latin American political evangelism has emerged in Venezuela, which comprises social work. I asked him why he delivers soups, and he told me his reasons. Through his campaign he obtained one million votes.

Who has one million votes in the opposition? I ask. I respect the million voters of Javier Bertucci, of course I do, and also the 2 millions of voters of the former candidate Henri Falcon, as well. And I'm going to talk with their leaders, and I'm going to open the doors for the political, cultural and business dialogue.

Likewise, I have asked to Professor Aristobulo, Minister of Communes, to organize a broad social dialogue that comprises all sectors of communes and community councils of the country. I want to hear the commoners of our country, their problems, diagnostics and respective solutions! Commoners of the Homeland, I want to meet with you ordered by phases, sectors and with proposals! I want to meet with pensioners! I want to hear the women movements and their proposals! I want to hear the youth! I want to hear the working class!

But, all this with a purpose: To seek solutions at a tactical level for achieving immediate solutions. Additionally, it also aims at seeking strategic proposals for structural development.

I want to hear the oil industry working class because we need to increase the production in one million barrels, and who is going to do that? Maduro? Is Maduro going to do it? I call for the oil industry working class. Luis Rangel, are you going to help me increase the oil production

or aren't you? Comrade, where is the oil industry working class? Where is it?

Can I count on the oil industry working class for increasing oil production or can't I?

And I ask this because I already made justice and appointed a great man, Major General Manuel Quevedo, who has all command in the oil industry. There is no one above him in the oil industry. You can do all the changes that you have to do, you are authorized Major General Manuel Quevedo. Proceed. Be fulfilled!

I want a socialist PDVSA, and as the PPT says: An ethical, sovereign and productive PDVSA. Please Manuel Quevedo, read the PPT's document, it has plenty of concepts that lead to actions.

I want an ethical, sovereign and productive PDVSA, which is the backbone of the Nation. Oh! Yes I remember. We must break the oil dependent rentier model, but it seems like some mafia within PDVSA understood that they must break PDVSA. The responsible ones are imprisoned. Didn't I imprison them? Didn't I bring them to justice with evidences? Didn't I imprison two PDVSA presidents?

But the question is not only to counter the mafia, apprehend and imprison them. It is also necessary to substitute them with new managers, new directors from the working class, but the latter must be productive, my friend. I don't believe that they automatically will perform well because they come from the working class. I have been disappointed many times with the slogan: They must come from the working class, because we give them the opportunity in the position and later they don't perform properly.

I know what I'm saying, and you will not find a man more committed to the working class than me in this Revolution. Please, don't come to me with dogmas and slogans. Neither the dogmas nor slogans and false radicalisms will work here.

Whoever we place in those positions must comply with, first: Honesty; second: Capacity; third: Efficiency; fourth: Outcomes; everything else is superfluous. The commitment is showed with outcomes. There are persons who speak everyday of Chavez, and you can listen to them: My commander Chavez; I believe in Chavez, Chavez is my inspiration, but the outcomes? They don't have any. The commitment to Chavez, the Revolution, the Homeland and our people is very good. It is demonstrated with love, feeling and passion but also with concrete management outcomes.

We must increase the production in one million barrels this year. If we have to ask for help to OPEC, do it now. Major General [Quevedo], President [of PDVSA], ask support from Russia, China, the Arab countries immediately. Venezuela has to go beyond those one million barrels. Far beyond than that figure in order to set it as example to follow, comrades.

The problem is not Maduro, and a large part of the country has understood it in this way. That is why you nominated Maduro for

President. Because he wasn't useless, no, conversely he was making his best efforts. He has received your love and he has lovely sent love back.

I want to progress and the first step I will take -please take note whoever has to do it- the first line is: Dialogue and pacification of Venezuela. That is the first line of action. We are going towards a dialogue and pacification process.

I have submitted to the Commission of Truth, Justice, Pardon and Reunification of the National Constituent Assembly, a proposal to overcome the wounds left by the *guarimbas* [riots] and conspiracies until today. There are a number of persons imprisoned because they committed crimes due to political violence, and I want that these persons will regain their freedom, thus giving them a chance within a national reconciliation process, except those who have committed serious crimes or murder.

Venezuela has already gone through pacification processes, and I think they were successful. I have no doubt of it. The comrades Julio Escalona and Fernando Soto Rojas were -how could I call it- beneficiaries, protagonists of the last pacification process that took place in the 4th Republic? In that time, the government of Luis Herrera Campins (RIP.) undertook a process of pacification and reintegration in the political and civil-legal life of all chiefs of the guerrilla groups that remained in arms in the country at that time.

There were three groups: The Revolutionaries Organization (OR)-Socialist League -I was militant of this one; the Bolivarian Revolution Party (PRV) *Ruptura* -Tarek William Saab was militant of this one; and Red Flag-Committee of People's Fights (CLP) -Elias Jaua and Diosdado Cabello in *El Furrrial*, they were militant of this one. Elias took the university path and Diosdado took the path of the legal weapons.

Oscar Schemel -Constituent deputy and analyst-, it is important to review this process because is part of the political heritage of the country. Well, these are contradictory and complex processes, and during such process I met Julio Escalona, who was living in secrecy as from 1966. We met in 1979, at the Aula Magna of the Central University. "The handsome" Julio Escalona, he still uses the same haircut. Comrade commander Julio Escalona, I salute you.

I was a youngster, wasn't I Julio? Do you remember that I was a prankster? Do you remember? [laughs] I was terrible, a real prankster indeed, but a serious militant though.

In those times I met Fernando Soto Rojas, we call him "the old guy". He was in the war, in Beirut - Lebanon, joined with Al-Fatah and the Palestinians when he found out that he could return to Caracas legally, by using his passport; and they are here today as Constituent deputies. How does life take many twists? Don't you think? Dear commanders and masters.

They taught me large part of what I know and what I am; and later came another giant: Hugo Chavez -who left his mark on us forever.

In the same line, *Bandera Roja* [Red Flag party]. Gabriel Puerta -who ended in the extreme right wing; it is very sad, don't you think? See him full of mould and funguses within the extreme right wing when he could have had a key role here in the revolutionary side instead; also Douglas Bravo, from that party, political father of Tarek William Saab.

Ali Rodriguez tells me that Douglas Bravo was resistant to legalize himself, he said he was not going to legalize himself, that he was irreducible, so Ali had to meet with "Pepi" Montes de Oca, then Interior Minister, from Lara state, and "Pepi" Montes de Oca told him: "Look Ali Rodriguez, the Official Gazette with your names and ID numbers issues tomorrow, as of that moment you are already pardoned and you can do whatever you want with your lives. Tell Douglas Bravo that president Luis Herrera sent him a message..." Douglas Bravo sent him a message: "Well, if you don't want to be in the big city, that's your problem, stay there for the rest of your life, but as far as I'm concerned I won't chase you anymore, you are legal..." Ali Rodriguez told me that. Well, he didn't stay, one month after he was in Coro holding a ceremony, Douglas.

And so it began 10 years before, 1968, Rafael Caldera surprisingly wins because it was the Christian democracy, a more reactionary one, and it surprised with a peace process that was unable to reach the entire Venezuelan left-wing because there was a revolutionary left-wing that counted on lots of martyrs, and which firmly believed that they were going to seize power by means of the armed struggle, and they didn't send others, no ambassador gave dollars to Julio Escalona, Douglas Bravo or Fernando Soto, no, they went to a war they believed in with their guns, though the historical overview may give some conclusions of those heroic times, of sacrifice, of martyrology. Ten years before Rafael Caldera becomes president, he won with a margin of 5 votes, I'm sure victory was snatched from Prieto Figueroa, they robbed his victory, but well, that is how those fraudulent electoral regimes were. And he called, he negotiated with the guerrilla leaders who were in prison from the Venezuelan Communist Party, from the revolutionary left-wing movement, they had guns in their hands, opening fire every day, and president Rafael Caldera granted a pardon to all the armed, to all the leaders, he opened the jails and freed them, and he said: "Go to the streets and engage in politics..." And the then left-wing, both of 1968 and 1978, laid the guns and engaged in politics in peace, with respect to the Constitution, to the laws, and so they did.

I hope that all the sectors involved in the political violence of 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, learn from the historical process and go to the streets - those who committed violent crimes against public affairs and against the peace of the country - and engage in politics, I want a peace policy, one of reunion, reunification and reconciliation of Venezuela. I believe in the peace of the country, we need reconciliation.

Would you join me in this?

So I announce a broad reunion and peace policy that shall allow the factors which were involved in the violence to join the political, legal and

constitutional struggle, without guns or violence against the country; I announce it.

First line: Dialogue, peace, reconciliation; I ask for your support, ideas, proposals. A policy of this kind is not free from mistakes, but this time mistakes shall not be ours, shall be theirs. If one of them relapses there is justice, justice shall play a part again, because some ask me, what if some of them relapse? And for that reason, aren't we going to do it? Aren't we going to look for peace, reunion and reconciliation? I have privately spoken both in person and over the phone, with all the opposition leaders I think, even with the extreme right-wing; I have spoken with them and I have told them exactly this; what I say in public is the same to what I say in private. I have spoken with all of them and I shall continue to do so. Jorge Rodriguez has spoken even with the devil as he is a psychiatrist; he carries holy water with him and comes back from hell like a new man. - Cameramen are getting tired, every day there are less of them -.

Second immediate line of work, we had a very good meeting yesterday, right? With the state governors, we spent three hours revising the economic problems of all the regions on Tuesday, in order to take measures for immediate action and solutions to problems that could be promptly fixed to increase the production of food in the country, rebuild the distribution system, take note, I said rebuild the distribution, merchandising and pricing systems of all the products of the 50 Plan. Rebuild comrades.

To those who are and aren't here from the Superintendence, we have to rebuild the system; we know how to do it. I appreciate the ideas and proposals, we agreed that tomorrow, Friday, all state governors of this country are handing me written proposals.

Second line: move towards a productive economic agreement to achieve the stabilization of the economy and a growing, sustained and sustainable recovery of the economic growth depending on an economic prosperity, production of wealth and satisfaction of needs. National and international wealth and the satisfaction of the material needs of our people, of the material life of our people, the strengthening of CLAP. I was telling the state governors, CLAP are not something circumstantial, CLAP arrived to strengthen and develop themselves as a great system for the attention and fair distribution for the people.

What would become of us without CLAP? Where would we be? Ernesto Villegas, you are a historian, a writer, a futurologist, almost an astrologist, what would become of the homeland without CLAP, military comrades, state governors? It was a great mechanism of attention, of protection. Let us make it the great stabilization mechanism, let us move towards the multiplication of the Sovereign Food Fairs, of the popular markets. I set a goal, three thousand, have we reached 3 thousand? We have to set a greater goal, 5 thousand, a popular market every weekend, strengthen the CLAP stores and regulate all the municipal markets of the country which are mainly in the hands of mafias. We have to take them away from the mafias which set the prices of the meat, potatoes,

legumes; and where is the government? Or is there no government in this country? Huh?

Second line - I must emphasize it -: an economic agreement with the business, productive, public, mixed and private sectors to develop a process of sustained growth and recovery of the entire Venezuelan economic system.

Third line: a renewed and frontal fight against all forms of corruption and in favor of the emergence of a new patriotic ethic, of a new citizen ethic.

The emergence of a new patriotic citizen ethic, a new social ethic, a new economic ethic, because, what's this phenomenon of the criminal mafias that steal the money? There is a group of people who are dedicated to take away the country's money, what's their ethic? Who do they respond to? Do they love their homeland? Those who steal the money, don't they love their families? No, because their mothers, daughters, grandmothers and wives are victims when in the streets people are charging them 30 percent more for payments by card; that is going to end.

Let us take measures to put an end to that, I have a meeting with the Banking Council, to establish measures along with Sudeban and state governors, so in that way the theft in payment points will come to an end, they think of a thousand ways to steal from the people, but, why is that? The reason is criminal economy, the metabolism of criminal economy. Because of that we need new ethics; or those individuals that have access to 3 or 4 CLAP trucks, then sell them to the *bachaqueros*. If I ever caught them in my hands you will need to restrain me, you hear me? They are indeed criminals, because those that steal food from the people do not deserve God's forgiveness. Who steals CLAP boxes to sell them on the streets, is a criminal, a villain that steals from our people.

What ethics can they have, Mario? You analyze these issues, comrade Adán Coromoto Chávez Frías. What ethics can they have? Or when the one we put in charge of a position ends up stealing, or doing with their bureaucracy what they want and not solving the problems of the people, that is what I have called the fight against minimalism, bureaucracy and corruption; let us not take the plank out of our own eye, let us take the plank out of the eyes of the businessmen when they manufacture a product in 100 bolivars and want to sell it in a million bolivars. Is that called ethics or robbery? And it happens indeed; or in the case where they bribe a public official for benefits.

Together with the Judicial Authority, Citizen Authority, the Ministry of Education and our people's forces, moral reserves and ethics. Let us launch a firm offensive against wrong doings, corruption, bureaucracy, and minimalism.

Above all, let us launch a creative offensive towards new patriotic ethics, we have to feel our nation and do things well for our country. New citizen ethics, as people of an honest country, that deserves more. New social ethics, for the Christian vision of social duty and protection. I call all Venezuelans to build a new patriotic, citizen and social ethic; we can fix

several of the problems that we are facing now, the most urgent ones. Without doubts, the rise of economic criminal groups is a deterioration of the Republic. Social and historical processes are not lineal, revolutionary processes as ours are object of reversion, regression and we have had an ethical retreat towards the construction of a new spirituality, new morals; "Maduro's fault", I assume my faults, but I assume my responsibilities because I believe in the people, in moral reserves and I know we are going to create a new citizen, patriotic and moral ethic.

I also ask for your support.

Fourth line: the strengthening and expansion of the achievements of the People's Power, the security system and social protection; starting from the new things - colleagues in charge of the new public education - We have to keep deepening what we have accomplished so far, but we cannot stay as if life were unmoving and changeless; the new accomplishments in People's Power, Communal Power, Social Security, Missions and Great Missions, the Card of the Homeland which has been a complete success, for instance; the new accomplishments in equality, social inversion, let us draw a map with the new accomplishments, including education and public health. Don't forget the Healthcare Mission; let's give priority to the hospital system, the medicines system, 800SALUD and Social Welfare. We also have to mention the new accomplishments in national culture, identity, ethics, and spirituality. The new accomplishments in the housing system, that is to say the Great Venezuelan Housing Program which must to be improved, as well as the Neighborhood Enhancement Mission which has almost disappeared; after an investigation I carried regarding this issue, I have come to the conclusion that we need to do more with this Mission, there is a lot left to accomplish with it, a lot of houses to work on.

This is just self-criticism, there's no intention of making the Minister feel bad, we have to be firm and objective, the Great Venezuelan Housing Program is going up whereas the Neighborhood Enhancement Mission isn't in its best moment.

The new accomplishments in terms of employment, the protection of worker's rights, social stability, salary, the *cestaticket* (food bonus), incomes and bonuses; the new accomplishments in terms of collective hiring, working class, public officials, teachers, health workers, oil workers, industrial workers, the new accomplishments in the great People's Power system, social security and in all the social Missions created by Commander Chávez.

The fourth line of action is one of progress, now we can move towards the protection of our people; let us mention once again the Card of the Homeland, why do you think the Card of the Homeland was the enemy's target? They fear it; much of our victories of these four consecutive processes are due to the Card of the Homeland, the renewal of hope, the beginning of a new system. Look, we must seek for new protection systems for the people in the middle of this warfare - where they are being constantly attacked and we have to protect them -. We have developed several programs through the Card of the Homeland and we have to keep doing so; ensure the protection of the family, enhance the Homeland's Households Protection Mission.

Next week I am going to adjust the amounts granted for the protection of more than 5 million of households of the homeland and I have set as a goal for June to reach 6 million households definitively protected in an integral way, 24 million of compatriots protected by the Homeland's Households Protection Mission. And by which means? Thanks to the Card of the Homeland.

Through the Card of the Homeland we ensure the protection of pensioners, young people, students and the people in general; they deserve the newest and the best.

In the fifth place: the defense of Venezuela before the imperialism attacks, the defense of institutions. During the last two months we have faced conspiracy and we have caught the responsible ones - convicted and confessed -. They have confessed all their plot to prevent the elections of last May 20th, they have confessed who financed them, an alliance between the U.S Embassy in Venezuela and the Colombian government, financing conspiracies to incite military violence and by doing so they thought they were going to prevent the democratic elections and the people's election. I call for the defense of Venezuela by all those who feel patriotic.

To the aggressions that we have received are added the last U.S. government sanctions - they do not intimidate me under any circumstance - but what I can say to the Venezuelan people is that the sanctions requested by Mr. Antonio Ledezma, Julio Borges and the Venezuelan right-wing, by Mr. Omar Barboza to the U.S. government and signed by president Donald Trump last Monday, they make Venezuela suffer, beating all Venezuelans who live of their effort, they hamper our access to money and the transactions to do the necessary importations to Venezuela. I cannot lie to anyone, these sanctions are going to represent big and painful difficulties that we are going to face, overcome

and defeat. Let there be no doubt about this, dear comrades who are listening to me; Mr. Trump's sanctions shall be cancelled and defeated earlier rather than later with our work, sacrificed and struggle. Let it be, Amen.

Fifth line: the defense of Venezuela, a great and broad defense front of Venezuela; I ask for the support of the political parties, comrade Diosdado, comrades of the great patriotic pole, I ask for that national and international support. I thank you for the support.

I ask for national and international support; I thank all firm support manifestations and support by the great powers of the world: Russia, China, Iran and other world powers which comprehensively protect us and with whom we share partnerships and development alliances of common benefits. It is possible to ensure the defense of Venezuela from all spaces and with all institutions; we shall ensure the defense of our country to counter conspiracies; unveil, cancel and defeat them; achieve the defense of our Homeland, of our dignity, our right to peace.

We must be careful because Juan Manuel Santos' period is coming to an end on August 7th; he has two and a half month left and Alvaro Uribe, as he did back in his days as President, is promoting provocative actions in the border to lend the new government a warfare situation.

I denounce to the world that Juan Manuel Santos is preparing grim plans to leave off a warfare situation confrontation between Venezuela and Colombia in the border, just Alvaro Uribe did. Be alert, I urge the Colombian Armed Forces to not pay attention to any provocation and our Bolivarian National Armed Forces to deploy maximum intelligence, prevention, defense capacity of the country and Minister General in Chief, please call the Minister of Defense and alert him of all these plans. We know more than what we say and we know more than what they think we do. What I want is peace with Colombia; peace, brotherhood, prosperity and love with Colombia. We want to walk though the Bolivarian union path under respect.

In Bogota all political sectors attack us; there is an anti-Venezuelan and anti-Bolivarian chorus. This is not something new it is the Santander's chorus against Bolivar's Homeland. Well, I hope that the new President-elect shall be up to the task and have the bravery and courage to rebuild the relations with Venezuela; relations that Juan Manuel Santos, by his own responsibility, regrettably destroyed in levels ever seen in 200 years

I claim for the union with Colombia, the respect of different models, peace and dialogue with Colombia. This is my clamor dear Colombians and Venezuelans.

And last but not least, in sixth place is our direction, comrades: capitalism or socialism, *bachaquerismo* or Christianity, weather we multiply bread and fish or we snatch bread and fish from the people to resell them, weather we build our country's wealth to distribute it in favor of social happiness or we build it to hand it over to four millionaire families. What is the direction of Venezuela? Venezuela has ratified again its direction: socialism; our Christian, Bolivarian, Chavista, Robinsiniano, Zamorista socialism, our 21st century socialism, our democratic, independent, rebel, solidary socialism. This is our direction.

Commander Chavez always asked us, I never forget that, every time a plan was presented to him, any kind of plan, even if it was to build a railway, a street, a road, an urbanism, a football field, a school, a CDI, an ambulatory, a high school, a university, a factory, he always asked: where is the socialism? He defined the Venezuelan socialism as a multidimensional one and established five dimensions which we have to reinforce in all institutions; we must build a more socialist Bolivarian National Armed Forces. There must be a socialist, patriot, anti-imperialists, revolutionary, anti-oligarchy National Armed Forces in each barrack, unity, command, and nave. For instance, since you are here, comrade militaries in chief of the country, we have to build the five dimensions of socialism in all spaces. In the first place the ethic, moral and spiritual dimension; in the second place the political, ideological and institutional dimension. The social dimension - the new social model - the economic and territorial dimension as a planning formula; we cannot give concrete answers. For example, at the farmer's commune in Merida state, is there socialism over there? At the Bolivarian University of Venezuela, is there socialism in each classroom? Socialism as a utopia, yes there is, as a dream, yes there is; but we need to materialize that utopia; that dream into a concrete practice.

In the sixth place, I propose as a convergence point of all the five lines presented, the Socialism, look for the Socialism.

Comrades of National Constituent Assembly, compatriots who are watching and listening to me; I am here as you can see, this young worker, this human being grown in the streets, in the suburbs, in the factories, a former bus driver. This is me, after going through five years of tough times during his first period; I am standing here victorious and more committed than ever with our people.

You have elected a president to build the Socialism and solve problems, a president to develop dialogue and a peace process, and you have elected a president that comes from the people, the real people; the people's voice. National Constituent Assembly, I subordinate myself to you, to all your great power and I subordinate myself to the people's power. I believe in the people, we shall prevail, you will see! We shall prevail! Our Homeland shall be a Potency as our Commander Chavez dreamt it. It shall be! Thank you very much comrades.

From the bottom of my heart I shall continue to say: Until the victory forever!

Good afternoon Venezuela. Thank you very much!