

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 7, 2019

Her Excellency Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the Union for
Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Vice-President of the Commission
European Union
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Your Excellency:

We write to express our grave concern about the situation in Venezuela, where the Maduro regime's growing repression is fueling a deepening humanitarian crisis. We urge the European Union to align its sanctions regime with that of the United States and Canada to make it clear to Maduro and his accomplices that they must allow for the restoration of the democratic order in Venezuela.

We appreciate the European Union's efforts to seek a peaceful resolution to the worsening political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, as well as the decision of many EU member states to recognize National Assembly President Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's Interim President. The European Union's past sanctions on more than a dozen Venezuelan officials involved in human rights abuses and undermining democracy were an important signal, but we believe the continuing crisis merits immediate and increased pressure from democratic leaders in Europe.

The Maduro regime has intensified its systematic attacks on the National Assembly, Venezuela's sole remaining democratic institution, including persecuting nearly two dozen democratically elected Deputies. Additionally, the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights recently released a report confirming testimony by local human rights organizations, such as *Foro Penal Venezolano* and *Observatorio Venezolano de la Violencia*, detailing the extent of the Maduro regime's involvement in gross violations of human rights, the use of torture against political prisoners, and approximately 7,000 extrajudicial executions.

Likewise, the Maduro regime's economic policies and failure to address an acute humanitarian crisis have worsened living conditions for Venezuelans and are fueling a regional refugee crisis. Further, terrorist organizations, such as the National Liberation Army (ELN), are expanding their Venezuela-based activities with growing consequences for regional stability.

These deeply disturbing dynamics prevent the E.U.-led International Contact Group from achieving its goals of establishing the necessary conditions for a credible electoral process within the earliest timeframe possible and enabling the urgent delivery of assistance in accordance with international humanitarian principles.

Her Excellency Federica Mogherini

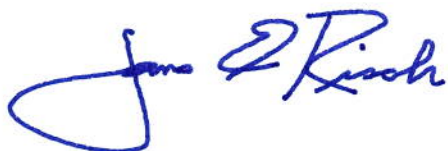
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The United States and Canada have responded to this deepening conflict by imposing financial and diplomatic sanctions on more than 200 Maduro regime officials, as well as several Venezuelan institutions directly responsible for human rights violations and widespread corruption. Washington and Ottawa have also made clear that sanctions can be removed from individuals who take concrete and meaningful actions to restore democratic order in Venezuela.

We strongly urge the E.U. to align its restrictive measures against Venezuelan persons with those imposed by the United States and Canada. To do so would send a powerful message to Maduro and his accomplices that they will not prevail, and that it is time for them to remove themselves as obstacles to the restoration of democracy in Venezuela.

Sincerely,



James E. Risch
U.S. Senator



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



John Barrasso
U.S. Senator



Cory Gardner
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator



Ron Johnson
U.S. Senator



Josh Hawley
U.S. Senator