

# The Current Situation in Venezuela

Outreach Aid to the Americas



## Crimes Against Humanity

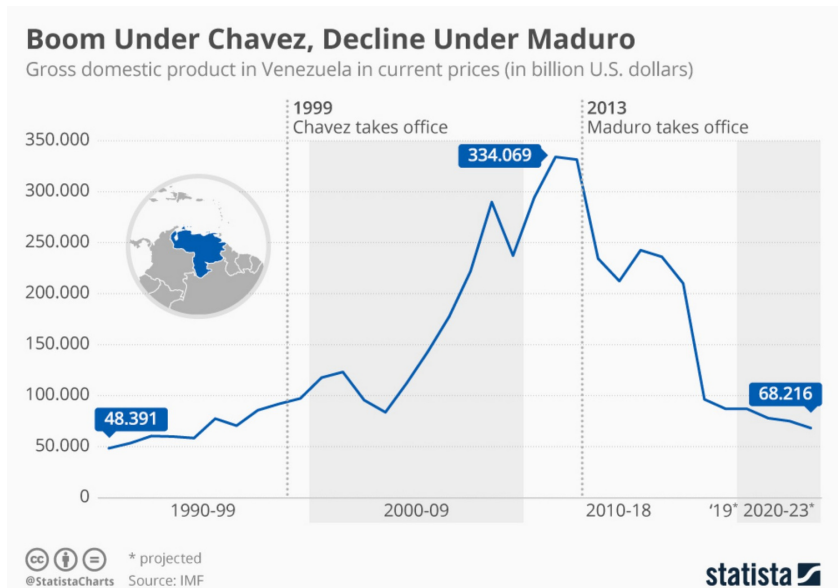
Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, visited Venezuela in 2020 and publicly accused Maduro's government of committing crimes against humanity. This is an ongoing investigation.

These crimes include extrajudicial executions, torture, disappearances, and detentions of political opponents. The country is also plagued by corruption and impunity.



## Economic Collapse

The Maduro government's economic mismanagement has deepened the country's unprecedented economic crisis. The country's fortunes became dependent on petroleum prices, which made them vulnerable to global fluctuations. Furthermore, the redistribution of this wealth, combined with the nationalization of private businesses, disrupted the economy and pushed away foreign investment. President Hugo Chávez, who with Fidel Castro, and other like-minded governments, formed the Bolivarian Alliance which stood for "21st Century Socialism." Later on, Nicolás Maduro followed Chavez's path, which ultimately led to one of the world's worst economic crisis.



Source: Katharina Buchholz



# Humanitarian Crisis

According to a recent national survey, Venezuela has become the poorest country in the region. "Ninety-six percent of Venezuelans live under the poverty line, and eighty percent live in extreme poverty." All goods and services are either limited or non-existent. Power and gas outages are commonplace, as is the lack of potable water. This unstable situation combined with a collapsing health system has caused inhuman living conditions and worsening health indicators. About 38% of Venezuelans have some type of malnourishment. Infant and maternal mortality rates are on the rise, and previously controlled diseases have been reemerging. The lack of state capacity has left an opening for gangs to take over provision of security and some services, leading to high rates of crime and general insecurity.



## Migratory Exodus and its Challenges

Today, about 17% of Venezuela's population has fled the country, and are currently living as refugees. As migrants, many are extremely vulnerable in their new country of residence, lacking the benefits of citizenship; they have little or no access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities. This situation is even worse for those who are undocumented, which is estimated to be about 2.5 million Venezuelans around the world. This mass exodus – and the risks migrants have taken in leaving the country – reveals how desperate the situation in Venezuela is. Although some of Venezuela's neighboring countries have welcomed refugees, the Covid-19 pandemic has further complicated these efforts.



Photo Credit: Federico Rios Escobar for The New York Times