

Cerritos Fall Conference 2019

# OCHA

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Topic: Humanitarian Crisis in Venezuela

Director: Jamil Dellawar

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October 12, 2019

To Delegates of Cerritos Novice 2019 Conference

Dear Delegates,  
Welcome to Cerritos Novice 2019!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our annual novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host another year of this long-standing conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2019, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. With 31 high school committees and 2 middle school committees, CHSMUN 2019 will provide a quality experience for beginners to learn, develop, and grow as delegates.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2019!

Sincerely,

Brianna Roldan and Tess U-Vongcharoen

Secretary-Generals

# OCHA

## Humanitarian Crisis in Venezuela

### A Note From the Director

Delegates,

Hey guys, I'm Jamil Dellawar and I'll be your head chair for OCHA this conference. I'm a senior here at Cerritos High School and have been part of the MUN program since freshman year and have no regrets. As for my future, I will definitely be going into the STEM field and am currently leaning towards computer science. As for school, I will be the president of the National Honors Society, California Scholarship Federation, and Mu Alpha Theta, as well as vice-president of Computer Programmers United. I have been a part of Varsity Track and Field with the jumps team from 10th to 12th grade. Outside of school, I have participated in many events, such as volunteering at Don Knabe park and teaching taekwondo at Oriental Moo-Do School. In my free time, I love watching YouTube videos, sleeping, and hanging out with family and friends. My favorite show would have to be The Office, with The Walking Dead at a close second (it fell off after a while). With this being said, I can't wait to be your Director for this upcoming MUN conference. If this is your first conference, don't worry! Try to think outside the box when it comes to solutions (this topic has many issues, meaning more types of solutions) and have fun! Feel free to email me at any time if you have questions about this topic or committee in general. See you in committee!

Sincerely,

Jamil Dellawar

Director, OCHA

### **Committee Introduction:**

The UN General Assembly adopted and ratified Resolution 46/182 on December 19, 1991, with Resolution 46/182 that created the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA (10). Resolution 46/182 created many groundbreaking frameworks, from creating today's global humanitarian guidelines to pushing for ready to use emergency funds, like the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) (10). From 2018 to 2021, OCHA plans to use OCHA's Strategic Plan, which includes transformed coordination, situational analysis, humanitarian financing, international humanitarian and human rights laws, access, and protection, and leadership, to express their vision and goals (16). Most of OCHA's actions are run through and in collaboration with the IASC, or the Inter-Agency Standing

Committee, and the ERC, or the Emergency Relief Coordinator. OCHA is known to work with humanitarian partners, like the Red Cross, as well as create plans for countries in need, such as their 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) in Sudan during 2017 (1).

## Background:

Venezuela was once a prospering nation, with it being praised by multiple countries back in 1993 of its democracy and continued to grow with the world's largest oil reserves. After Nicolás Maduro was chosen as successor of Hugo Chávez, a charismatic, but corrupt, leader he was able to create food subsidies and better education and health care. In 2014, oil prices plummeted and led to a huge amount of inflation, specifically 130,060% in 2018 and in late May of 2019, the inflation rate was at an all-time high at 929,797% (5, 14). Hugo Chávez, who was president from 1999 to his death in 2013, was able to cut poverty rates by almost half, from 48.6% in 2002 to 29.5% in 2011, and created better social inclusion with rewriting the Venezuelan Constitution in 1999 to include better rights for indigenous people and women, including housing, food, healthcare, and education (5). However, the growth of inflation, or the substantial decrease in value of currency, after Chávez's administration led to Nicolás Maduro's leadership being questioned by many countries (14).

The Venezuelan Crisis has caused a humanitarian crisis in that hyperinflation has led to food and medicine prices skyrocketing. This makes restocking shelves on retail and grocery stores much harder, with all supplies and foods now carrying "steep price tags" (7). There are currently three types of markets: government-owned, private supermarkets, and the black market (7). Government-owned markets are only open on select days and can have lines that last hours, with no guaranteed source of food to be purchased, because the food is subsidized to reduce the inflated price (7). Private supermarkets have super-inflated price and experience shortages of food (7). Black market prices can cost up to 15 times more than government-owned market prices, but are usually less than the inflated price by private supermarkets. Black markets were also reported to be "illegal and can be dangerous" (7). Black markets, government-owned, and super markets are the only sources that are financially sustainable for Venezuelans and, even then, over 80% of homes are food insecure and the number of children under the age of five, who suffer from at least moderate malnutrition, has increased by 7% (7, 8, 10).

In regards to prices within Venezuela, there were many comparisons exposed to news staff in 2015. The U.S. price of two pounds of powdered milk was \$7.24 USD, and in Venezuelan black markets, the price can go up to \$703.54 USD (7). For Maize flour, U.S. prices are on average \$9.27 USD and in Venezuelan black markets, the price can be up to \$301.50 USD (7). Medicines are more rare and will lead to the collapse of the healthcare system within Venezuela (8). This became understood when Marcos Carvajal, a former famous American baseball pitcher, died in Venezuela because the drugs required to aid Carvajal had to be shipped to Venezuela from abroad, causing him to die in the hospital the next day (8). For those who buy medicine off the black markets, the medicine from Brazil and Colombia comes at the risk of being expired or contaminated because of improper containment (8). The Pan American Health Organization reported that measles and diphtheria were eliminated in Venezuela, till a recent exposure and outbreak in 2016, both of which are easily preventable with sufficient vaccinations (10). This extreme situation has led to people within Venezuela unable to purchase food or medicine, regardless of their economic stature.

The Venezuelan government, specifically president Nicolás Maduro, has been refusing to take any form of aid from other sources, even with the infant mortality rate rising by 30% in 2016 (8). The Venezuelan government has turned back many forms of aid and been very strict on what is coming into the country, with only about 50 tons of food and medical supplies coming from Russia to aid a total of 31 million Venezuelans (4). From basic medical supplies to food, the Venezuelan government has not permitted any aid to reach the Venezuelan people. These consequences have ultimately led to Venezuelans fleeing and settling in other areas around Latin America, the United States, and Spain. Over 3 million people have left Venezuela since 2014, with 1.1 million people seeking refuge in Colombia, 506,000 in Peru, and 288,000 in Chile (14, 10).

Human rights, such as freedom of expression, has also been put under fire with the Venezuelan government having policies that hinder humanitarian rights. Venezuela's Law Against Hatred "includes vague language undermining free speech" (10). This law, however, violates article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights created by the UN which states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression" (11). With this, organizations, such as the Human Rights Watch, have called out Venezuela for their violation of these rights (10). Other human rights crises happening in Venezuela include children being detained, with 137 out of the 988 detained between the 21st and 31st of January 2019 being under the age of 18 (14). Civilians have also been tried in military court, with charges including "attacking a sentinel" (14).

Another conflict that is still ongoing in Venezuela is the question of who is the current president. The sitting president is currently Nicolás Maduro, who was elected for a second term in 2018, where the election was "heavily rigged in his favor" and will continue to be president for another 6 years (8). However, Juan Guaidó "declared himself acting president and said he would assume the powers of the executive branch from there onwards" on January 23rd, 2019 (15). Maduro denied this right and stated this was the United States' reaction to get rid of him from office (15). This came just before the U.S. employed sanctions to prevent the importation of Venezuelan state oil, with Venezuela's economy heavily dependent on it (14).

## United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations is heavily involved with this crisis, with the World Health Organization (WHO) being the biggest contributor in financial aid, almost \$8 million USD (12). The United Nations Children's Fund and the Norwegian Refugee Council have also both contributed a considerable amount of money to the crises and the UN's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) has monitored over \$24 million USD for Venezuela in 2018 alone (12). However, there is not much monitoring of supplies and food within Venezuela itself. The UN responded to the crisis that there will be more of a focus on "nutrition, health and protection". It considered an emergency declaration, but would need "the consent of the government, in order to distribute humanitarian aid along with our principles of neutrality and impartiality" (17). Organizations, such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), and WHO have all made reports of specific issues regarding their committees and are currently working towards solutions to directly solve issues in an effective way, such as creating miniature programs in which they focus on the economic standpoint and attempt to rebuild the

economy (12). Actions other than financial aid have come in the form of NGOs, such as WithRefugees and Human Rights Up Front (16).

## Bloc Positions:

**Western Bloc:** Most Western countries back Guaidó, including the U.S., France, Britain, Germany, and Spain (19). Canada is also part of a Latin American group called the Lima Group (18). Russia, however, has long stood with Maduro and aided to Venezuela through financial grants and directly sending aid for the people in the economic crisis (19).

**Latin America and the Caribbean Bloc:** The Lima Group, a coalition of mostly Latin American nations, was created in order to ensure there was a safe exit of the Venezuelan crisis (18). This includes 11 of the 14 nations involved that back Guaidó and call for a change of power from Maduro to Guaidó (15). However, Guyana, Mexico, and St. Lucia have not supported this idea (15).

**African Bloc:** African countries are split with being involved with the issue and avoiding it, with South Africa and Equatorial Guinea voting not to discuss the Venezuelan crisis within the UN Security Council, whereas Côte d'Ivoire decided to abstain (14). However, some believe that the Venezuelan crisis should be dealt within Venezuela with help only to aid the citizens being affected (14). South Africa is specifically against dealing with this issue, as they have their own issues; however, countries like Côte d'Ivoire has recognized the humanitarian issue, but would not like to get directly involved (14).

**Asian-Pacific Bloc:** Asian countries, like China, focused aid for the people within Venezuela, such as fixing its power grid (19). Asian countries are also split on whether they support the interim president Guaidó or Maduro, with China supporting Maduro and other countries hoping for more democracy, like Japan (3).

## Basic Solutions:

With all of these crises and amidst this presidential crisis, the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela is one to be dealt with a multiplicity of multifaceted solutions. Solutions shouldn't just focus on Venezuela, but also other countries' responses towards these crises. Solutions towards helping refugees, for example, could focus on not only holding refugees in surrounding nations, but also a plan to ensure these people are safe in the process. Innovative solutions for Venezuela's economy is also acceptable; however, focus more on the humanitarian aspect of these crises and how it would aid in human rights.

A plan you may follow is the Humanitarian Response Plan in Sudan, which was able to direct aid to specific areas of Sudan and had a timeline of events to happen (3). By doing so, any additional solution could be added in a specific area to ensure every part of the plan was able to address every problem.

## Questions to Consider:

1. Is your country supporting the current administration, the new interim presidency, or abstaining from the entire issue?
2. How should Venezuela decrease the number of black market purchases?
3. What has your country done in response to the Venezuelan crisis?
4. Is there a way for foreign aid to assist in decreasing the inflation rates?
5. What legislation or actions can be taken in order to allow humanitarian aid to reach Venezuelan citizens?
6. Is there a way to provide vaccinations to prevent further outbreaks?

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