

Escenarios

Boletín quincenal de análisis estratégico dirigido a la sociedad civil venezolana



15 EXTRAORDINARY •
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WHAT'S NEW?

On July 28th the presidential elections were held in Venezuela, a day that counted with the enthusiastic participation of the population and that, in spite of [some incidents](#), passed quite normally. At 4:30 in the afternoon [exit polls](#) suggested that Edmundo Gonzalez (EGU) was ahead in the voting by a wide margin. As of 6:00 p.m., when the closing of the voting stations, and the totalization of the results began, [there was a refusal to deliver the electoral records to all voting station members and witnesses, as required by electoral regulations. Furthermore, according to \[Comando Con Vzla\]\(#\), the transfer of voter information from the voting stations to the national totalization room, was interrupted. Nicolás Maduro assured that \[the system had been “hacked” by Elon Musk. At midnight Venezuelan time, CNE chief rector \\[Elvis Amoroso announced\\]\\(#\\) that with 80% of the votes and 59% participation, Nicolás Maduro \\(NM\\) had received 51.2% of the votes while EGU received 44% of the votes.\]\(#\)](#)

[Almost immediately](#), Chilean President Gabriel Boric reacted with [two messages](#) on his X profile, followed in the early morning by Uruguayan President [Luis Lacalle Pou](#), Peruvian Foreign Minister [Javier González-Olaechea](#), Costa Rican President [Rodrigo Chaves](#), European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy [Joseph Borrel](#), Colombian Foreign Minister [Luis Gilberto Murillo](#), Special Advisor for International Affairs to the Brazilian Presidency [Celso Amorim](#), United Nations Secretary General [Antonio Guterres](#) and the Mexican [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#). All agreed on the need for transparency in the publication of duly detailed results.

However, the website of the Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE), [appeared offline](#), so the results were not publicly accessible. The democratic alternative claimed to have the certified electoral returns - the document that records the result for each voting station - in sufficient number to prove EGU's victory. Despite the fact that the electoral arbiter had not announced the total results, and the results of the voting stations had not been published, Nicolás Maduro [was proclaimed president](#) for the period 2025-2031 on 07.29.24. On that day, The Carter Center, which was formally invited by the authorities to carry out electoral observation activities, [requested the immediate publication](#) of the certified election returns. The election returns of the 30,026 voting stations set up in polling stations throughout the country became the center of dispute. [As explained](#), the voting machines [produce a printed tally](#) at each voting place before being sent to the CNE headquarters in Caracas, where the national totalization is made.



Witnesses representing all candidates at a voting place must sign that printed tally. The strategy of the EGU candidate was to ask people to stay at their voting station to perform social control of the counting of the station and the announcement of the results. Having witnessed the whole process gave the population a generalized conviction of the results, even before the CNE announcement.

[Delsa Solórzano denounced](#) that, during the night of July 28, witnesses had been excluded from the act of totalization and were being denied copies of the tally sheets. In the early morning of July 29, [María Corina Machado stated](#) that they already had 40% of the tally sheets in their possession, a figure that by the night of that day had increased to 73.20%. The EGU campaign team digitized the tally sheets and published them on several websites, [which were blocked](#) shortly after their appearance. They were finally able to keep them online on the website <https://resultadosconvzla.com/>. At the closing of this bulletin this portal contained 81.7% of the tally sheets, giving Edmundo Gonzalez the victory with 67% of the votes (7,156,462 votes) over Nicolas Maduro with 30% (3,241,461 votes). These same certified election returns were in the hands of both the CNE itself and the witnesses of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), which as of August 5, 2008, still did not make them public. After subscribing the so called "[Acuerdo Amplio de Caracas](#)", the rest of the minority candidacies (except Enrique Márquez), agreed to accept whatever the CNE said, therefore they did not promote their own witnesses in the polling stations. Based on the published tally sheets, [different initiatives](#) published data [visualization maps](#).

On 02.08.24 the [CNE releases a second bulletin](#) of results in which Rector Amoroso again communicates figures without further detail, stating that NM had obtained 6,408,844 votes (51.95%), while EGU attributed 5,326,104 suffrages (43.18%). The curious thing is that 4 days before this second report, the CNE [carried out the act of proclamation and awarding of](#) Nicolás Maduro as the new President of the Republic. However, as the days passed without verifiable information of the result, different personalities and international entities joined the petition for the disclosure of the results: [Pedro Sanchez](#), President of the Spanish Government; [Cristina Fernandez](#) and [Alberto Fernandez](#), former Presidents of Argentina; [the Latin American Council of Social Sciences](#) (CLACSO) and the [Frente Amplio](#) of Uruguay.

A decisive factor for the international perception of what had happened in Venezuela occurred on 07.30.24, when the [Carter Center released a statement](#) in which it affirmed that "*Venezuela's 2024 presidential election did not comply with international parameters and standards of electoral integrity and cannot be considered as democratic (...) The fact that the electoral authority has not announced results broken down by voting station, constitutes a serious violation of electoral principles*". Miraflores' reaction to the accusations has been furious: NM [accused the Carter Center](#) of having disclosed a written report before the elections, suggested that Cristina Fernandez "[had betrayed the legacy of Peron and his people](#)". In addition, he [expelled the diplomatic corps](#) of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru, Panama, Dominican Republic and Uruguay. He [also suspended commercial](#) flights to and from Venezuela to Panama and the Dominican Republic. [Brazil assumed the protection of](#) the diplomatic headquarters of Argentina in Caracas, and with it the life and integrity of the 6 refugees there. On 04.31.24 Nicolás Maduro went to the Electoral Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice (TSJ) where he [filed a writ of amparo](#) to oblige all candidates to hand over the electoral records to the judicial body. However, this possibility has been questioned due to the lack of independence of the body, [as established by the United Nations Independent Fact Finding Mission](#).

Monday, July 29th was a day of protest against the disregard of the popular will. [Laboratorio de Paz geolocalized 210 protests](#), including the toppling of 7



statues, [6 of them representing Hugo Chávez](#), as well as dozens of cases of vandalization of [billboards](#), [headquarters of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela \(PSUV\)](#), [mayors' offices](#) and [police modules](#). Protests were self-convened, spontaneous and decentralized. They did not have a single focus of interest, nor predetermined routes from one point to another of the territories. The main profile of the demonstrators were people from popular sectors, although middle class mobilizations were also registered. The main demand was to reject the illegal proclamation of Nicolás Maduro and to vindicate the triumph of Edmundo González Urrutia.

Qualitatively, the human rights situation during this crisis is the worst in contemporary Venezuela. As we close this bulletin, [Nicolás Maduro revealed](#) that two thousand people had been arrested (including journalists and human rights defenders), against whom “there would be no pardon”. The [Penal Forum](#) had verified 988 arrests, of which 91 were adolescents. [21 people had been killed](#) in the context of demonstrations and at least [74 attacks by armed civilians](#) (“colectivos”) against demonstrators had been registered. New systematic actions were added to the reiteration of recurrent patterns of human rights violations in Venezuela (abusive use of force in the containment of demonstrations; use of armed civilians in public order functions; arbitrary detentions; violation of due process and the right to defense; torture and inhuman, cruel and degrading treatment, censorship): [Extortion](#) to those who are detained; [dismissal](#) and [deprivation of liberty](#) of prosecutors and public defenders for refusing to abide by the illegal orders of the authorities; [massive cancellations of passports](#) to political and social leaders of the country and, finally, the detention of people only for having [shared information](#) through their WhatsApp profiles. NM announced [new restrictions on the use of social networks](#), so it is possible that the difficulty of access to information in the country will continue to increase. Different organizations, such as the [UN Fact-Finding Mission](#) and the [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights](#) have publicly expressed their concerns.

HOW CAN IT AFFECT NEGOTIATION MECHANISMS AND AGREEMENTS?

The [Permanent Council of the Organization of American States](#) (OAS) convened an extraordinary meeting on 07.31.24 to “*address the results of the electoral process in Venezuela*”. However, a resolution demanding the

Venezuelan authorities to immediately publish the certified electoral returns of Sunday's elections, did [not reach the necessary support](#) to be approved, after Brazil, Colombia and Mexico abstained.

Brazil and Colombia, in coordination with the United States, [are leading a diplomatic initiative](#) to seek a political mechanism for the resolution of the Venezuelan crisis, excluding Chile due to President Boric's confrontation with the Miraflores Palace. According to the newspaper El País, these presidents would hold talks in the coming days with Nicolás Maduro with a proposal of a direct negotiation between the two main presidential candidates, excluding María Corina Machado from the table. [According to journalist Juan Diego Quesada](#) *"Some defend an electoral repetition with an exhaustive verification, others a more direct dialogue in which an amnesty would be offered to Maduro and his circle -no more than 20 people- on the condition that they accept the result that seems to have come out of the ballot boxes"*. In the government's repressive offensive, it seems that there is little room for maneuver, so these efforts could take weeks to achieve any result. For its part, the [European Union released a communiqué](#) where it states that it *"welcomes the efforts of regional partners, with whom it maintains close contact, to promote dialogue and a negotiated solution to the crisis"*.

A group of former Chavista ministers, [sent a public letter](#) to the presidents of 3 countries (Colombia, Brazil and Mexico) where they thank them for their efforts *"so that full respect for the popular verdict expressed last July 28th prevails"*. They also asked them, to intercede for *"an end to the repression and criminalization of protests and violations of Human Rights, and the release of the hundreds of citizens detained for expressing their demands and claims regarding the results announced by the CNE"*.

WHAT CAN CIVIL SOCIETY DO TO MITIGATE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS?

- Venezuelan civil society should coordinate efforts with activists of the diaspora to maintain the work of visibility and denunciation of situations that violate human rights.
- NGOs should make the necessary incidences to maintain the diplomatic efforts of Brazil and Colombia, suggesting that they include the human rights situation in their agenda.
- As a protective measure, national organizations could continue to give their opinions on the evolution of the Venezuelan crisis from their international peers and allies.
- Organizations should exhaust all instances of regional and universal mechanisms for the protection of human rights, providing them with rigorous and verified information.



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Laboratorio de Paz es un centro de investigación y pensamiento estratégico venezolano, fundado en el año 2012, que se dedica a analizar, divulgar y generar recomendaciones que contribuyan a la resolución de conflictos a través del abordaje interdisciplinario democracia, no violencia y derechos humanos, priorizando comunidades emergentes y vulnerables con base en el derecho a la paz, el espacio cívico y los derechos culturales.