

THE CENTRIST DEMOCRAT INTERNATIONAL (CDI)

CONSIDERING,

That among the fundamental principles of democracy, as a right of the people which governments are obliged to guarantee, are: respect for the sovereignty of the people, political pluralism, the exercise of power in agreement with the rule of law and, among other essential elements, the separation and independence of political powers;

CONSIDERING,

That threats against democracy are assuming new forms, forms distinct from traditional coups d'état yet which nevertheless similarly oppose all governments emanating from the exercise of popular, direct and secret suffrage, thus highlighting a concerning pattern of governments which, though having an initially legitimate mandate, nevertheless proceed to empty democracy of its very contents and standards, thereby manipulating the rule of law and disregarding the principle of democratic transition;

CONSIDERING,

That, in the case of the Americas, the consciousness of new threats or new forms of authoritarianism such as those currently taking place was the reason why the so-called "Inter-American Charter" was adopted on 11 September 2001;

CONSIDERING,

That in the case of Venezuela, following the parliamentary elections of 6 December 2015, which provided the democratic opposition centred around the Democratic Unity Roundtable (Mesa de Unidad Democrática – MUD) with a qualified majority in parliament, the government of Nicolas Maduro Moros, with the support of other state institutions controlled by the governing Socialist party (PSUV) – such as the Judiciary and Electoral Court– proceeded to openly deprive the National Assembly of its constitutional prerogatives and to act without respect for the parliamentary immunity of elected and sworn members of parliament – thereby threatening this very institution and its leaders, even with dissolving parliament, with not providing it with the public resources needed for its

functioning – followed by steps to undermine the MUD's legal existence;

CONSIDERING,

That, on the eve of general elections, the government of Nicaragua, presided over by Daniel Ortega, a political ally of the Venezuelan government, using the control exercised by the Supreme Court of Justice and the National Electoral Council, intervened against the leadership of Nicaragua's most relevant opposition party, the Independent Liberal Party, by replacing its authorities, removing 28 full members of parliament and substituting members of parliament who contested these anti-democratic initiatives, thereby eliminating even the possibility of holding authentic and competitive elections;

CONSIDERING,

That in the case of Venezuela, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Luis Almagro, acting on the basis of the Inter-American Charter, presented his findings to the OAS's Permanent Council regarding the grave subversions of the democratic order taking place in Venezuela, in full expectation of measures to contribute to the re-establishment of democratic transition;

CONSIDERING,

That with regard to Nicaragua, several national parliaments and relevant non-governmental organizations have raised their voices in alarm and in, particular, have called upon the different governments in the region, on the OAS, on the European Union and on the 26 former heads of state and government who are signatories of the declarations of the Democratic Initiative of Spain and of the Americas, urging them to clearly express their concern regarding the grave threats to constitutional and democratic order currently affecting the transparency and legitimacy of democracy in Nicaragua;

RESOLVES,

First, to condemn the grave attempts to undermine the constitutional and democratic orders of Nicaragua and Venezuela;



Second, to call on all Centrist Democrat International member parties to adopt initiatives which contribute to the restoration and normalisation of democracy and the climate of freedom in Nicaragua and Venezuela;

Third, to call on multilateral organizations dealing with the promotion and safeguarding of democracy, and on their member states, to adopt responsible and necessary measures in order to contribute to the re-establishment of the democratic climate, of respect for the rule of law and for the maintenance of guarantees of human rights: in particular, the authentic exercise, by means of elections or referenda, of all citizens' right to political participation;

Fourth, the Centrist Democrat International, in its next meeting, will adopt a strategy for the collective defense of democracy, of its essential elements and the fundamental competences of their implementation by governments, and establish a baseline for the conduct of CDI member parties, with the aim of containing new forms of authoritarianism that are threatening democracy in the world.