

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 24, 2014

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
2201 C Street  
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Samantha Power  
U.S. Permanent Representatives to the United Nations  
The United Nations  
760 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Secretary Kerry and Ambassador Power:

As the 69<sup>th</sup> regular session of the United Nations General Assembly begins, we are writing to express our strong objection to the candidacy of Venezuela to a non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.

While we would prefer the Administration enforce harsher sanctions against human rights violators of the Maduro regime, we do recognize that the Department of State has: determined that Venezuela has failed demonstrably to make sufficient efforts to adhere its obligations under international counternarcotics agreements; expressed concern that Venezuela lacks due process or fair trial guarantees for persons unjustly incarcerated; and, has revoked visas for senior level regime officials.

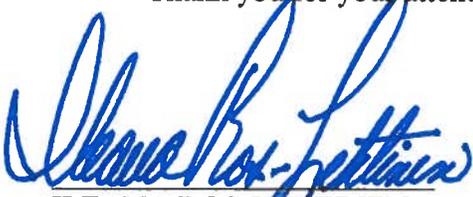
The instability and current leadership in Venezuela is no longer just a regional problem; it has expanded into a global threat with the intention to undermine U.S. interests across the globe. As we seek to develop a comprehensive strategy to resolve the world's most pressing challenges, such as those in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Russia, a Venezuelan seat at the Security Council will embolden the Venezuelan regime and will serve as a platform from which the rogue regimes it collaborates with can use to advance their own political agendas that run contrary to our security interests.

For example, the Venezuelan regime has already given Iran a platform to operate and infiltrate the Western Hemisphere to promote its nefarious activities and, as a result, Venezuela's state-run oil entity, PDVSA, has been sanctioned by the State Department for delivering cargoes of reformat to Iran under the Iran Sanctions Act (ISA) of 1996 (as amended by the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act (CISADA) of 2010), for its activities in support of Iran's energy sector. Venezuelan leader Maduro recently made anti-Semitic remarks and compared Israel to the Nazis and Syrian dictator Assad expressed his support for the violent crackdown by the Maduro regime on peaceful opposition protests in Venezuela. With Russia, Vladimir Putin recently offered Venezuela a new line of credit and an oil deal in an attempt to inject money into the spiraling economy that has made the Venezuelan people suffer greatly.

We must object when tyrannical regimes, which constantly threaten our national security and undermine our foreign policy, use this opportunity to broadcast anti-American rhetoric and legitimize their oppressive tactics. The United States must take a decisive stand in this issue, provide a voice and a vote for those being oppressed, and promote our ideals of democracy, freedom, and the respect for human rights.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

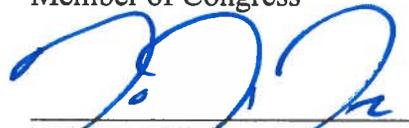
Sincerely,



ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN  
Member of Congress



DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ  
Member of Congress



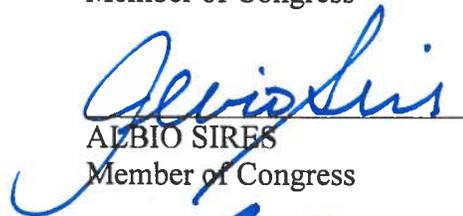
MARIO DIAZ-BALART  
Member of Congress



TED DEUTCH  
Member of Congress



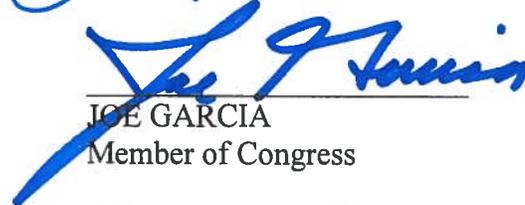
MATT SALMON  
Member of Congress



ALBIO SIRES  
Member of Congress



CHRIS SMITH  
Member of Congress



JOE GARCIA  
Member of Congress



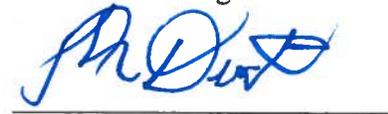
MICHAEL T. MCCAUL  
Member of Congress



PATRICK MURPHY  
Member of Congress



GUS BILIRAKIS  
Member of Congress



RON DESANTIS  
Member of Congress



TED S. YOHO  
Member of Congress



SEAN P. DUFFY  
Member of Congress