

PRESS RELEASE

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Venezuela: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the latest developments

On 10 June, the Venezuelan Supreme Court (TSJ) issued a decision giving a 72-hour deadline to the Electoral Nominations Committee established last November within the National Assembly to identify the names of the candidates for rectors of the Electoral Council (CNE). On June 12, the Venezuelan Supreme Court appointed the rectors of the CNE. On 15 June, the same court suspended the current board of directors of "Accion Democratica" (AD), one of the main opposition parties and a member of the G4 opposition group, and appointed an ad-hoc board.

These decisions reduce the democratic space in the country to a minimum and create additional obstacles to the resolution of the profound political crisis in Venezuela.

Free and fair legislative and presidential elections that respect international standards are key to overcome the crisis in Venezuela. An independent and balanced CNE as well as a level playing field enabling the participation of political parties and candidates is a cornerstone for a credible electoral process. The EU calls on the Government and opposition to engage in meaningful and inclusive negotiations towards the constitution of the CNE and the lifting of bans on opposition parties. All national actors should go back to the negotiating table, in the interest of all Venezuelans.

At a time when a complex humanitarian situation adds to the political crisis, all parties in Venezuela must join forces to address human suffering and find ways towards a sustainable and inclusive political solution. The EU reiterates its support to any meaningful effort in that direction as well as its long-term commitment to the people of Venezuela, and stands engaged in working with Venezuelans and with the international community, including through the International Contact Group, towards a peaceful return to democracy and the rule of law.

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