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White Houses Statement on Venezuela Sanctions

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[AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED: Text version below transcribed directly from audio]

Good afternoon, everybody. As you've seen, the President signed a new executive order that strongly punishes the Venezuelan regime. This order demonstrates more clearly than ever that the United States will not allow an illegitimate dictatorship to take hold in the Western Hemisphere at the expense of its people.

Through the President's strong action, the United States will target the means with which the Maduro dictatorship can accumulate debt to enrich its corrupt regime insiders and perpetuate its repressive behavior.

Only six weeks ago, several million Venezuelans voted overwhelmingly against the Maduro regime's plans to convene a Constituent Assembly that the people of Venezuela never requested. The United States and the regional community stood in solidarity with the Venezuelan people and demanded that their voices be heard.



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But Maduro chose to embrace dictatorship over his own people. As a result, a dozen of Venezuela's neighbors gathered in Lima, Peru, and rejected Maduro's actions.

President Trump promised strong action if Maduro moved ahead and ignored his people's will. With today's announcement, the President is keeping his promise of strong action and continuing to show strong leadership.

This executive order does not need to be permanent. The President has said that (quote) "[the] stable and peaceful Venezuela is in the best interest of the entire hemisphere."¹

We will continue to work with our friends and partners in the international community to support the Venezuelan people until their rights and democracy are fully restored.

¹ **Full quotation:** "President Santos and I also discussed the deteriorating situation in Venezuela, and it is really in a very bad state, as you see and as we all see through the media. The stable and peaceful Venezuela is in the best interest of the entire hemisphere, and America stands with all of the people in our great hemisphere yearning to be free." [Joint Press Conference with President Santos of Colombia, 18 May 2017]