

## PERSUASIVE MEMO

**To:** All Congressmen/Congresswomen

**From:** The President

**Date:** February 2, 2012

**Subject:** Need for change in Venezuela government

During the last few days, I have expressed my hopes that all political parties in the Republic of Venezuela would act with restraints and show full respect for the peaceful expression of political opinion. I was saddened by the loss of life yesterday as supporters of the ruling party were dispersed by the party to disturb the peaceful demonstrators and shoot those who didn't leave the demonstration. I wish to express my solidarity with the Venezuelan people and look forward to working with them to ensure that they exercise their democratic rights.

Recent events in Venezuela are worrying and disturbing considering there is still three months to the general elections. Though details are not confirmed by my sources, earlier reports indicate that undemocratic actions committed by the current government provoked the recent demonstrations. Information available at this time also indicates that hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans gathered peacefully to seek answers to their grievances. The ruling government then attempted to suppress the peaceful demonstrations. The supporters of the ruling party who were not in uniforms fired on unarmed peaceful demonstrators resulting to more than 250 demonstrators wounded and 50 dead. Venezuela military and police refused orders to fire on peaceful demonstrators and refused to support the ruling party's role in such human rights violations. Five independent television stations were also ordered not to report on the events.

I have every expectation that this situation will be solved peacefully and democratically by the peace loving people of Venezuela in accordance with the principle of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The essential elements of democracy, which have been weakened in recent months, needs be fully restored. I will be consulting with fellow heads of states to assist Venezuela get back to where it is supposed to be.

In the meantime I have sent four delegates to Venezuela to establish talks between the ruling party and the opposition. We will be meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 to discuss this matter and you are kindly requested to avail yourself as we seek to restore peace in Venezuela.