

Alex and I negate, The US should end its economic sanctions against Venezuela

## **Contention One is Ruining Reform**

Sanctions are driving Venezuelan economic reform in two key areas:

### **Subpoint A is Diversification**

Venezuela's dependence on oil is holding back economic growth. [Bornstein of Kellogg explains in 2017](#), oil is extremely volatile because of frequent fluctuations in demand and shocks in prices. [Nitzberg 18](#) furthers, a lack of diversification has left Venezuela's economy in ruins.

Luckily, Venezuela is on the path to recovery. [Armas of Reuters finds in 2019](#), US sanctions have hurt Venezuela's petroleum sales. To earn hard currency, Venezuela has stepped up exports of food and other resources in an effort to diversify.

However, absent pressure from sanctions, diversification stops. [Wilg of the Michelson Institute writes in 2012](#) that resource dependence is not a coincidence, but a strategic pursuit by government elites to limit the extent to which political opponents can challenge their power. When there are alternative sources of income, it is made easier for others to accrue influence and oppose Maduro.

Devastatingly, due to the oil crisis, [Kaylee Green of The Daily Signal reports](#), 90 percent of Venezuela lives in poverty. Diversifying is key as the World Bank finds, without economic diversification, countries are more vulnerable to external shocks that can undermine prospects for long term economic growth.

### **Subpoint B is Privatization**

Venezuela's oil industry is in a difficult situation. [Aleem of Vox reports in 2017](#) that PDVSA, Venezuela's state-owned oil company, suffers from a bloated workforce of inexperienced employees who only serve to consolidate Maduro's power. As a result, [Francisco Monaldi of Forbes finds in 2019](#), no major oil projects have been developed since 2005.

Fortunately, sanctions are forcing Venezuela to change. [Alvarez of Venezuela Analysis writes last week](#), sanctions have made it difficult for PDVSA to **contract** out oil operations. As a result, [Argus Media concludes last December](#), Venezuela has increased oil production by 800,000 barrels per day by quietly **transferring** control to joint venture partners. Thus, the [New York Times writes in 2020](#) that PDVSA is no longer producing and is undergoing a de facto privatization.

Crucially, [Pittis of CBC finds in 2019](#), the key to get Venezuela's economy back on track is to bring in private companies that are more concerned with profits and less about corruption. Improving the economy is critical, as [World Vision quantifies](#), the economic crisis has pushed 4 million people into poverty.

Overall, [Argus Media notes in December](#), as a result of sanction-induced reforms, food and medicine imports have rebounded, and hyperinflation has fallen. [Lopez of Venezuela Analysis furthers in 2019](#), the economy will grow by 4 percent in 2020. This is necessary, as it represents a fundamental shift in Venezuela's direction away from disaster. [O'Hanlon of Brookings finds in 2019](#), without proper economic correction, Venezuela risks becoming a failed state.

### **Contention Two is Inviting Intervention**

Ending sanctions against Venezuela would force America to take military action. [Josh Rogin of The Washington Post writes in 2018](#), the US has called Venezuela a part of the "Troika of Tyranny" in Latin America and pledged to confront the oppressive regime. Indeed, the US has been using sanctions to pursue a campaign of "maximum pressure" against Maduro. However, [Alex Ward of Vox finds in 2019](#), America's strong and reckless rhetoric has placed itself in a double bind. The US must double down on pressuring Venezuela or risk a foreign policy failure.

**This risks Trump's reelection.** [Tony Shaffer of Miami Herald writes in September](#), pressure on the autocratic regimes reflect key American principles that could strengthen Trump's reelection bid. Specifically, a hardline stance on Venezuela is key to winning Florida, a swing state that has decided 11 of the last 12 elections, and one that Trump has made central to his campaign. [Lindsay Singleton of The Hill confirms in August](#), the Trump administration's hawkish approach to Venezuela is driven by the role Florida will play in 2020.

Thus, the US will be forced to turn to military intervention. [Dan Eberhart of Forbes finds in 2019](#), America has few tools available before the military option is the only one left. Without sanctions, the only possible other option is military intervention as all others have been exhausted.

Devastatingly, [Frank Mora of Foreign Affairs](#) finds that the US would intervene through a precision bombing campaign and the result would be years of fighting and rebuilding. Overall, [Ward](#) quantifies that this military intervention would spark a civil war and kill put the whole country at risk.