

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

Our Sole Contention is Civilian Suffering

Current US sanctions cause countless Venezuelan civilians to suffer through 3 ways.

Subpoint A: Obliterating Oil

US oil sanctions have paralyzed Venezuela's oil industry. [Roache of Al-Jazeera writes in 2019](#), sanctions have prevented US firms from conducting business with Venezuela's state owned oil company, PDVSA, and frozen the company's assets. Moreover, [Zuniga of Financial Times reports in November](#), sanctions have created a shortage of naphtha, an oil additive used by Venezuela to refine its heavy crude. In response, Venezuela has shifted its exports to Asian markets that are better equipped to handle the heavier blends. Unfortunately, heavier crude is far less profitable as [Tan of CNBC reports in 2019](#), PDVSA is selling oil to China and India at a steep discount.

For these reasons, [Rodriguez of The Washington Post](#) quantifies in 2019, sanctions have cost Venezuela 8 billion dollars in oil revenue, caused the economy to shrink by a projected 26 percent and cut imports in half. [The Washington Office on Latin America concludes in 2019](#) that as a result, millions lack access to food and medicine. Even worse, [Moreno of the Conversation explain in 2019](#) that the poor will be hurt most, as elites can still access offshore savings through the private sector.

Subpoint B: Closing CLAP

In 2016, President Maduro created the CLAP program to shield Venezuela's citizens from the economic crisis by delivering food boxes to impoverished citizens at a subsidized price. Despite its humanitarian goal, the United States opposes the program. [Carey of Geopolitics Alert writes in 2019](#), even with recent improvements to its distribution and internal accounting, CLAP has been the target of corruption allegations from the US. [Emersberger of FAIR explains why in 2018](#), CLAP is garnering support for Maduro, something the US stands strongly against. Thus, [Wroughton of Reuters finds in 2019](#), the US has sanctioned 10 individuals and 13 entities that help run CLAP, to turn the population against Maduro.

More specifically, [Dobson of Venezuela Analysis writes in 2019](#), sanctions have done three things to the CLAP program. **First**, they have hampered the ability to import the necessary food. **Second**, sanctions have blocked the shipment of goods, with only 2 out of the 12 shipping companies involved in CLAP imports currently operable. **Third**, international shippers have increased their costs to account for the increased risk of coming to Venezuela with sanctions.

For these reasons sanctions prevent Venezuela from importing food and sustaining the program with [the Monthly Review reporting in 2019](#) that over 18 million CLAP food boxes have already been blocked by US sanctions.

The impact is devastating. [Rubenstein of Mint Press News writes in 2019](#), CLAP serves almost 6 million people, and Maduro is looking to expand the program even further. [McEvoy of The Canary in 2019](#) puts it simply, Washington's decision to target Venezuela's CLAP program is the most transparent threat of mass starvation yet.

Subpoint C: Halting Hydration

[Salama of The Wall Street Journal finds in 2019](#), the US has stepped up its sanctions to a full embargo against Venezuela, blocking all trade and freezing all assets. Unfortunately, this embargo decreases access to clean water and sets the stage for a crisis in two ways.

First is by preventing repairs. [Larison of The American Conservative writes in 2019](#), sanctions have prevented Venezuela from acquiring parts to fix broken infrastructure. As a result, up to 20% of Venezuelans lack access to potable water.

Second by decreasing deliveries. [Fox of Venezuela Analysis finds in October](#), faulty water infrastructure has forced the government to deliver trucks of water to needy communities. Unfortunately, he continues that sanctions have created a shortage of machine parts and gasoline, reducing the fleet of water delivery trucks by 75 percent.

For these reasons, [RNN 19](#) reports that as a direct result of sanctions, the influx of water into the Venezuelan capital has fallen by 30%. Therefore, [Hernandez of the Washington Post finds in 2019](#), 20 million Venezuelans have suffered shortages or lost water completely. [Kurmanaev of the New York Times concludes in 2019](#), due to lack of access to clean water, over one million Venezuelans are at risk of contracting fatal waterborne viruses. Fortunately, removing sanctions would allow the necessary materials to enter the country, allowing clean water to flow once again.