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Is Nicolás Maduro popular?

By: Yaima Cabezas / CubaSí  
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Venezuela has been heavily scrutinized since it has been governed by the left, but much more after Nicolás Maduro took office in 2014. Some did not believe he would last that much, and yet he has done a great job for a decade now.

His time has not been easy, in addition to the economic and social crisis, he has constantly been the subject of ridicule and criticism for his working-class origin and his intellectual preparation. He has suffered physical attacks, attempts to eliminate him in any way; he has endured the contempt and global intimidation that has done everything possible to corner his government, that is, the Bolivarian nation. But Maduro has surprised everyone with his firm stance, and has managed, little by little, to take his depressed people forward.

No one can deny that his political work is constantly hindered by today's big media. In this regard, Venezuela is a clear example of the media war. During all this time, they have magnified each of their actions on all fronts, and, although it was not the right's goal, that barrage of information has fueled his notoriety as he has never stopped making headlines.

For better or worse, he is in the world's major media outlets, on radio, television, as well as on social media, and in Venezuelans' everyday lives. Against all odds, he managed to overcome a lot of obstacles that aimed to uproot him like weed.

His presidency has been turbulent since the very beginning. The threats have not been discreet, and the scenario has been marked by strong protests throughout all these years, with a peak in 2017, when there were a significant number of deaths and injured people, international sanctions, as well as rushed elections, and scandals of all kinds.

The dispersed Venezuelan opposition has made a lot of noise supporting coup attempts and traitors to the Homeland, collaborating with terrorism in all its facets, supporting an invented government of a self-proclaimed president named Juan Guaidó, whom no one remembers anymore.

That same disruption helped Nicolás Maduro, also the insufficient alternative to his government. With its ups and downs, Chavismo is strengthened. In such circumstances, little by little, Nicolás Maduro has made great strides. The economy is not what it was a few years ago when there was no bread or water. They had to open up to mercantile flexibility, and take stimulus measures.

It is hard to speak from a distance from personal experience, but much to the regret of the right, up to now the pollster Hinterlaces guarantees that the Venezuelan president has high levels of popularity. As expected, the statistics are rejected by public opinion, but the numbers cannot be denied.

The fact that Venezuela is now a less violent country cannot be manipulated. Police reports states so. Common people show no signs of stress on the street. Few years ago, people could not even use their cellphones due to the risk of being robbed. You were not saved not even at home. The crime rate has dropped, and this is paramount for any country. That, together with economic growth, is one of the issues that Venezuela's emigrants take into account to return, either with the *Plan Vuelta a la Patria*, or on their own initiative.

However, the opposition, so used to demonizing Nicolás Maduro, finds it unusual that he maintains a positive image above important right-wing leaders. Such behavior speaks of his growth as a politician, his efforts to offer an inclusive project, of tangible results, as well as, of course, the disorder that prevails in his counterpart, unable to offer a better option.

In summary, unexpectedly for some, and for others based on hard work and with the support of an entire presidential team, the positive opinion on the management of Nicolás Maduro has skyrocketed if we take a general view of his presidency. And, although difficulties persist, there are sectors of the Venezuelan population that are given more

guarantees and confidence.

During the last decade, Nicolás Maduro experienced some tough times, of constant popular tension, limited natural resources in almost every field, and hence, the discontent of Venezuelans who did find solution to their immediate while doubting every word of every delivered political speech, especially due to errors, belated action, blunders, certain reluctance to change to solve major issues like the domestic economy crisis. The crisis forced migration and this hurt to the extreme everyday life.

At present, destabilizing strategies have lowered. The smear campaigns continue, sometimes overlapping, other times more explicit, but usually very well-orchestrated, and with good results for the opposition. However, Nicolás Maduro remains against all odds. What are the reasons behind it? How to ignore it?

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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