



### IT'S TIME TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

1. The citizens, organizations, and social movements that subscribe to this communiqué, consider that the time has come to clearly express our unwavering commitment to the path of peace, understanding and the construction of a negotiated solution that has the people at the center of its action.
2. We ratify our commitment to the construction of a peaceful, constitutional and electoral solution to the Venezuelan conflict. Convinced that, as Prof. Pedro Nikken said, *"negotiation is not the best way, it is the only way before a disaster"*
3. We present the **National Civic Forum** as a space for the articulation and action of a plurality of social actors who aspire to contribute to the construction of a prompt solution to the crisis in Venezuela. The initiative is the result of a growing process of articulation that has been carried out since 2017 through the dynamics of *Social Dialogue*. Its main objective is to unite the most diverse sectors of the country, businessmen, unions, social organizations, unions, faith communities, academies and universities, among others, with the purpose of proposing ways of solving the serious situation we and millions of Venezuelans are going through, inside and outside the country.
4. The **National Civic Forum** seeks to incorporate the voices of diverse social sectors in the transcendental decisions of the nation. We have the will to act decisively in seeking answers to the serious problems of Venezuelans, as well as in the respect for human rights and the reestablishment of democratic institutions in Venezuela.
5. From civil society we consider it essential that the organizations and political forces define, with the support of civil society, a roadmap that allows Venezuela to get out of stagnation, an urgent task to avoid prolonging the people's suffering. This roadmap should re-establish communication channels with the government.
6. In addition to a restoration of democracy, we Venezuelans yearn for a significant change in current living conditions. Achieving this requires building spaces for genuine dialogue between the parties in conflict, and becoming their guardians and guarantors, exercising our civic duty.
7. It is in our capacity as citizens that we demand from those who hold power urgent attention to the ills that affect us as a nation, always in strict compliance with the National Constitution and international covenants on human rights signed by the Venezuelan State. It is within this framework that we propose the development of the necessary

communication challenges to redesign a negotiation mechanism that guides the country towards a future of peace, well-being and progress for all.

8. The diverse factors that come together in the National Civic Forum have held multiple meetings with actors across the political spectrum in search of humanitarian solutions to the suffering of the people. We propose the creation of a permanent framework of shared principles and practices that will lead to solving the social emergency and the reinstitutionalization of our democracy.
9. There are issues that cannot be postponed that transcend political differences and that are not contradictory to efforts to restore democracy. Today it is essential to activate the vaccination programs against Covid-19, and this requires reaching urgent agreements and promoting mechanisms and regulatory frameworks that guarantee the greatest coverage of the population. In the same way, the serious state of health, food, and education in the country, as well as the defense of our territorial sovereignty, must be addressed with international humanitarian support. Civil society and the government can and must speak on these issues to seek urgent solutions.
10. We call on the international community to support, in a coordinated and purposeful manner, the efforts made by the Venezuelan society to demand all political actors to participate in the task of reaching progressive agreements that result in benefits for the population, and whose concretion does not interfere in the dynamics that must occur between the parties in conflict for the resolution of the political problem, but rather serves as a fertilizer to establish the confidence and the necessary negotiation mechanisms to approach a National Democratic Agreement.

A **NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC AGREEMENT** that enjoys the approval and enthusiasm of the majority of the population to thus open the process of reinstitutionalization of the State through the holding of free elections, with fair rules and verifiable results. **An agreement** to move forward and assume collective responsibility in building the future, saving lives and avoiding more suffering and more victims. **An agreement** based on principles of justice, truth, reparation and non-repetition; that promotes the democratization of the country, guarantees unrestricted respect for human rights and reunites society. **An agreement** that, in addition, makes possible accessing international financial resources, belonging both to the nation and international partners, essential to overcome the complex humanitarian emergency (CHE). **An agreement** that is the product of consensus between the different political and social forces that make life in the country.

## **COMMUNIQUE FROM THE NATIONAL CIVIC FORUM**

**During the II National Civic Forum meeting**

**Palace of the National Academies**

**February 5, 2021.**