EARTHQUAKE IN VENEZUELA: RECONSTRUCTION AND INVESTMENT FOR CAPITAL, DEATH AND EXPLOITATION FOR THE WORKING CLASS

"Natural" disasters or a product of greed?

On 24 June 2026, two earthquakes struck north-central Venezuela, leaving thousands dead, missing beneath the rubble, and injured. The current death toll stands at over 4,000, and this figure is set to rise as the 40,000 to 50,000 missing are accounted for. The worst-affected region, where the most buildings collapsed and the highest number of deaths occurred, was La Guaira.

When there is a **FIRE**, a **FLOOD** or an **EARTHQUAKE**, it is quickly labelled as a "natural" disaster. But how can it be considered "natural" that houses are knowingly built on flood lands, that these houses have real mousetraps in which part of the working class is condemned to live and die, that forests are left uncleared because it is not profitable, or that they are deliberately set on fire to collect subsidies, or that bridges that are known to be in a precarious condition are left unrepaired until they collapse?

Fire, water, gravity and seismic activity are natural forces, but the reasons and consequences of these natural forces throwing thousands of people to their deaths are **social reasons and consequences**. It is the **LUST FOR PROFIT** imposed by the **process of ACCUMULATION of Capital** (impersonal force that feeds on the exploitation of the working class) that produces the circumstances in which these natural forces cause ravages, dragging thousands of people to premature death: *" (…) when society places hundreds of proletarians in such a position that they inevitably meet a too early and an unnatural death, one which is quite as much a death by violence as that by the sword or bullet; when it deprives thousands of the necessaries of life, places them under conditions in which they cannot live – forces them, through the strong arm of the law, to remain in such conditions until that death ensues which is the inevitable consequence – knows that these thousands of victims must perish, and yet permits these conditions to remain, its deed is murder just as surely as the deed of the single individual; disguised, malicious murder, murder against which none can defend himself, which does not seem what it is, because no man sees the murderer, (…). But murder it remains."* (Condition of the Working Class in England, F. Engels). This is the situation that has been lived in Venezuela.

In 1999, in the region of La Guaira – then known as Vargas State – mudslides, earth and rock swept away everything in their path when dozens of rivers and streams burst their banks simultaneously. The ground was unable to absorb the water from the extremely heavy rainfall that fell over a four-day period, so the terrain gave way under the force of gravity, literally sweeping the mountain down towards the coastal towns, leaving thousands dead and triggering a mass exodus of more than 100,000 people who were forced to flee to other areas.

But Capital cares very little about this; the concentration of capital in the area where the country's second-largest port and the main international airport are located caused the population to flock back there and the resumption of speculative real estate business with the reconstruction.

On the one hand, people who had to return because the need of a salary were forced to build their homes informally in the very riverbeds where the mudslide occurred or on the hills; on the other hand, the Venezuelan capitalist state—disguised as socialist—and private companies built, for their own profit, massive buildings and residential complexes—both public and private—with 20 floors or more on the new coastal land gained from the sea by the mud.

The **CYNICISM** of this capitalist society is such that, after thousands of deaths, it has the shameless nerve to publish that it was common knowledge that one couldn't build there, interviewing geologists and engineers who had warned that the land was not suitable for development. The so-called experts under capitalism are the very same people who end up signing off on all construction plans as loyal servants of capital, falsifying land surveys and rubber-stamping technical inspections of substandard and obsolete buildings and structures.

A part of the bourgeoisie, through its media, blames corruption and lack of oversight for the construction in those areas, claiming that cheap materials were used, and stokes the specter of so-called Venezuelan socialism as the cause of the catastrophe. There is no shortage of statistical battles over whether more buildings built by state-owned or private companies collapsed, all in an effort to shift responsibility for the thousands of deaths and promote their own business interests.

All of this is to **HIDE** the fact that as long as **CAPITALISM** exists (and there has never been even a gram of socialism in Venezuela), **no matter which government is in power, construction will take place wherever the needs of capital and profit demand, at the lowest possible cost, concentrating working-class populations in dangerous areas with full awareness of the risks involved, if labor is needed there to be exploited**.

The media are showing images of the wounded and the dead in Venezuela, highlighting the horrors of the disaster and the people clearing debris by hand due to a lack of machinery. Capital exploits the corpses of those whose deaths it has caused, calling for interclass unity between the exploited and the exploiters, manipulating them for its parliamentary agenda and to divert attention from the true culprit: the capitalist system itself.

Social Control and Repression

A few days after the earthquake, under the pretext of helping the population, the government ordered the militarization of the region: *"Given the gravity of the situation, Acting President Delcy Rodríguez declared the state of La Guaira a disaster area and ordered the militarization of the region to facilitate search and rescue operations and the distribution of humanitarian aid."* (América Económica, 03-07-2026)

The bourgeoisie's real interest in militarizing the area is to control and repress the population. With thousands of people injured, hospitals whose infrastructure was already obsolete and lacked sufficient supplies are now overwhelmed. With thousands of people left homeless and thousands displaced, the bourgeoisie must prevent the situation from spiraling out of control. The army's role is to suppress the protests that are bound to arise due to the lack of relocation, the lack of food, supply cuts, the lack of adequate medical care and medication, the state and conditions of the camps where the population is to be relocated, and the frustration, anger, and powerlessness that this situation will provoke. The bourgeois facade for the control and repression exercised by its repressive forces (police, army) is called "humanitarian aid."

US imperialism has sent a contingent of some 2,000 soldiers to Venezuela not only to control the reconstruction business, but also to establish direct military control over one of the country's most important strategic points: the port and the airport of La Guaira; the very port where Chinese imperialism had promoted the creation of a Special Economic Zone intended to subject the Venezuelan proletariat to the same level of overexploitation applied to the Chinese proletariat. The catastrophe has become an opportunity that US imperialism is exploiting to advance its position, seeking to displace Chinese imperialism from a strategic location in Venezuela.

Reconstruction and Debt

The bourgeoisie has already announced a reconstruction plan using funds released by the IMF. Let's remember that the US plan regarding Venezuela, which was dramatized with the arrest of the puppet Maduro in January, is for American oil companies to rebuild the energy infrastructure, advancing the funds against future sales of the extracted oil. Thus, by modernizing the infrastructure and increasing production, they could sell Venezuela's crude oil to the world, making huge profits and promising a Golden future for Venezuelans.

But there remains the enormous debt of Venezuela's capitalist economy: *"Venezuela is set to reveal a $240bn debt pile, much higher than previously thought"* (Financial Times, 24-06-2026). And the effects of the post-disaster hoarding of dollars are already being felt in inflation, an additional scourge on the Venezuelan proletariat through which the purchasing power of wages evaporates in bolivars, while profits have been converted into dollars throughout all these years of rule by the Army Party. The shipment of physical dollars sent by the US (the first since 2017) will be used, as it has been until now, to ensure business operations and corporate profits.

The harsh reality is that Venezuela's capitalist debts, the reconstruction of its energy infrastructure, and the rebuilding of the devastated area—as long as capitalism survives—**can only be paid for and carried out through the overexploitation of the Venezuelan proletariat**. As long as capitalism survives in Venezuela (even if one side or the other falsely dresses it up as socialism), the only fate for the working class is the exploitation of the commodity labor power to extract surplus value as the sole source of profit.

In this exploitation, the working class will again be the ones who pay in lives. According to the ILO report, more than 2.9 million workers die each year worldwide as a result of the so-called "workplace accidents" or occupational diseases. Exploitation and the poor state of Venezuela's infrastructure continue to leave a trail of injured and dead workers: *"Four Corpoelec workers injured after explosion at El Mácaro substation"* (July 2025), where a transformer explosion claimed the life of a technician and left linemen with severe burns. *"Emergency on Lake Maracaibo: Fire on a mixed-use platform leaves six workers with burns"* (May 2026). *"17 workers injured in a PDVSA drilling rig explosion in La Victoria, Apure state"* (June 2026). The capitalist market system is a **CRIMINAL** system that oozes death from every pore.

The Narcotic of National Unity

Precisely because the entire burden of reconstruction will fall on the working class, the bourgeoisie injects the proletariat with the narcotic of national unity and the fatherland. But for the working class, this famous "fatherland" is nothing more than our exploitation. All of them, everyone who has an economic interest in the exploitation of the working class worldwide in general and in Venezuela in particular, whether they belong to the officialist or opposition Venezuelan bourgeois, or American, Russian, Spanish, Chinese, or Italian—all base their profits on our exploitation.

Both the officialism and the so-called "opposition" have appealed to "unity, calm, and solidarity among all Venezuelans." But "fraternity" and "solidarity," as used by the bourgeoisie, mean nothing but subjugation and exploitation for the working class. The mask of "fraternity" fell away before the proletariat when it rose up against the bourgeoisie in June 1848 in Paris, in a historic lesson we must not forget: *"Fraternité, the brotherhood of antagonistic classes, one of which exploits the other, this fraternité which in February was proclaimed and inscribed in large letters on the façades of Paris, on every prison and every barracks—**this fraternité found its true, unadulterated and prosaic expression in civil war, civil war in its most terrible aspect, the war of labour against capital**. This brotherhood blazed in front of all the windows of Paris on the evening of June 25, when the Paris of the bourgeoisie held illuminations while the Paris of the proletariat was burning, bleeding, groaning in the throes of death. This brotherhood lasted only as long as there was a fraternity of interests between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat."* (The Class Struggles in France, Marx, 1848).

The big lie of socialism in Venezuela

The major victory of the Venezuelan bourgeoisie – both of officialism and of the "opposition" – has been its success in identifying the Party of the Army with socialism and communism. **It is an imperative necessity for the working class to eliminate this BIG LIE.** In Venezuela there is no socialism, there is CAPITALISM. Capitalism is based on **wage labor**, on the fact that **our labor power is just another commodity** and has a price: the wage. This is why **capitalism inevitably means exploitation and hunger for the working class. No change of parliamentary government is going to mean a real change for the working class under capitalism.**

This bourgeois world is sinking and threatens to drag us down with it, we have no patches or mends to apply it but a new society to fight and live for. And not a caricature of it with changed names but **a truly communist society:** without wage labor, without market, without anarchy of production, without private property, without State, without crisis or war... in which ***"the free development of each will be the premise of the free development of all"*** (Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1848).

DOWN WITH CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION THAT MURDERS THE WORKING CLASS!
DOWN WITH THE FALSE "SOCIALISM" OF THE ARMY'S PARTY!

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