

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
3500 PAN AMERICAN DRIVE
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33133



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
(305) 250-5300

FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION:
AUGUST 13, 2008

Tel: 305-250-5300
Fax: 305-854-4001
<http://www.miamigov.com/mayor>

Mayor Diaz Voices His Concerns about Situation in Venezuela

- *Mayor Sends Letter to Bush Administration and Members of Congress* -

Miami, FL –City of Miami Mayor and President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Manny Diaz, sent a **letter to President George W. Bush and members of Congress Tuesday highlighting his concern for the arbitrary disqualification of 272 political candidates in Venezuela.**

“The mayors of the United States view with grave concern the events occurring now in Venezuela,” said Mayor Diaz. “It is important that we express our concern and show our support for these candidates and for democratic principles in our hemisphere.”

Last June, the United States Conference of Mayors unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the summary and arbitrary disqualification of candidates without due juridical process in Venezuela, and denouncing the subjugation of the Venezuelan constitution and total disregard of separated branches of government. Since then, the disqualification of 272 otherwise eligible candidates has been upheld by the Venezuelan Supreme Court in spite of any formal charges against them.

One of these candidates is Leopoldo López, mayor of the Chacao district of Caracas and a political opponent of the current Venezuelan government. Mr. López, who is seeking the mayoralty of Caracas, has been an active leader in the Mayors Hemispheric Forum, an annual gathering of urban mayors throughout the Americas designed to promote cooperation and integration in our hemisphere.

The letter was delivered on Tuesday to President George W. Bush and key members of his administration, as well as to Congressman Howard L. Berman, Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Members of the community, as well as members of the Foreign Relations Committees and representatives of the Venezuelan diplomatic core in Washington, D.C. will also receive a copy.

Media Note: Attached please find a copy of the letter sent by Mayor Manny Diaz. The USCM resolution on Venezuela can be found at http://usmayors.org/resolutions/76th_conference/international_07.asp

###