

**Forum:** *Security Council*

**Issue:** *The Question of Colombia-Venezuela Border*

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**Position:** *Head Chair*

## **INTRODUCTION**

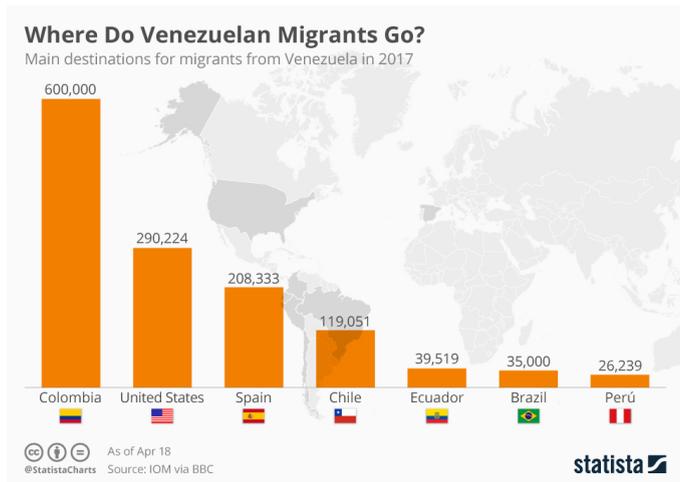
The Colombia–Venezuela border is an ongoing international border of 2219 kilometres (1378 mi) that separates the territories of Colombia and Venezuela, with a total of 603 milestones that demarcate the line. It is the longest border of both Colombia and Venezuela. Crime and violence have simmered along the lengthy Colombian-Venezuelan frontier for decades. But the regional spillover of Venezuela’s political conflict and economic collapse has caused ties between the two states to fray as well, amid border closures, a migrant exodus and rival military exercises. High bilateral tensions could spur escalating border hostilities while perpetuating the mistreatment of migrants and refugees whose movements have been restricted by COVID-19. Criminal and rebel violence in the liminal space between the two countries has been the prevailing concern this century—resulting in more than a dozen cessations of cross-border diplomatic, migratory, and economic activity since 2005. Today, at least 28 illegal armed groups operate in the border region, trafficking in all manner of illegal goods, including drugs, contraband oil and gold, and arms.

## **KEY DEFINITIONS OF TOPICS**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

(insert geological maps/ graphs)

Bilateral relations came under strain during the 1980s and 1990s, when Colombia’s internal conflict occasionally spilled over the border. But it was the election of Hugo Chávez as Venezuelan president in 1998 that marked the start of a widening diplomatic and ideological breach between the two countries. Chávez reoriented his country away from the U.S. and toward left-wing governments in Latin America, both democratic and authoritarian. He also cozied up to autocratic states elsewhere, like China and Belarus. Meanwhile, Colombian President Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002) and his successor Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010) sought U.S. help in combating both rebels and drug producers with the multi-billion-dollar Plan Colombia aid package.



## Major Countries and Organisations Involved

Both governments have aimed to diversify their commercial partnerships, albeit in different directions: whereas Caracas looked to China, Russia and Turkey before and after the imposition of U.S. sanctions from 2017 onward, Bogotá has sought to expand trade with a larger set of countries as well as with its main trading partners, the U.S. and China.

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

Venezuelan border states, including Zulia, Táchira and Amazonas, rank among the states with the highest percentage of people in need, according to a UN humanitarian assessment

2021 Venezuela Humanitarian Response Plan to assist 4.5 million people

## Timeline of Events

Bilateral diplomacy remained in a deep freeze, and on 14 March 2020, Duque announced the closure of all seven official border crossings as a measure to curb the COVID-19 outbreak.

## PAST SOLUTIONS (history)

On September 22nd 2021, The US gave more than \$336 million in humanitarian, economic, development, and health assistance in response to the Venezuela regional crisis, including inside Venezuela. This adds to the nearly \$407 million Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield announced at the International Donors' Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants on 17th June 2021. This brings the total U.S. Government contribution towards this crisis response to more \$1.9 billion since 2017, including more than \$1.65 billion in life-saving humanitarian assistance.