

Political Prisoner Lopez's Wife: Dialogue Does Not Exist in Venezuela - Recall is Only Hope (VIDEO)

MIAMI -- Lilian

Tintori, wife of Venezuelan imprisoned opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, admitted on Thursday night in Miami that "dialogue does not exist in Venezuela" and that the only hope to overcome the humanitarian and political crisis devastating the country is the referendum revoke the mandate of President Nicolas Maduro.

Tintori was at an event sponsored by the **Latin American Herald Tribune**, Demos of the Americas, International Solidarity for Human Rights and the InterAmerican Institute for Democracy at Miami Dade College. Tintori took the opportunity during a presentation of a book her husband Leopoldo Lopez has written during his incarceration - *Preso pero Libre* -- to speak to a large audience about her and the Venezuelan people's frustration with the "non-existent" dialogue and the humanitarian crisis in a country that "does not guarantee its people the minimum to live."

"The dialogue that we want to give is the dialogue of people signing to revoke Maduro," said Tintori.

The event was attended by Lopez's mother, Antonieta Mendoza de Lopez, the director of Human Rights Watch (HRW) for Latin America, José Miguel Vivanco, among other representatives of U.S. civil organizations.

Tintori said that while they agreed with a transparent dialogue and mediation by the Vatican, it was too late and this possibility had only served to win the Venezuelan government time.

She emphasized that the solution to the crisis is contained in two articles of the Venezuela Constitution, articles 72 and 350, by which the people can revoke the presidential mandate and make a declaration of civil disobedience respectively.

"Nobody said it was going to be easy to fight against a dictatorship," said Tintori on the eve of the presentation of the book, referring to the outrage felt by the people.

She stressed that Lopez and the total of 109 political prisoners in Venezuela form a "moral leadership of the country" looking for a solution to the constitutional dictatorship "this year".

Tintori said that the opposition has decided to proceed with the recall referendum, despite "obstacles" imposed by the Government of Maduro.

Thus, she stressed, there will be a demonstration on October 12 to promote the recall referendum signature collection that will take place the 27, 28 and 29 October.

Tintori warned that if the Venezuelan government does not recognize the signatures and fingerprints its own systems capture and does not announce the date of the recall, the opposition will use civil disobedience.

"Do not you be afraid of that word, civil disobedience, which is a right, is constitutional and is not violent," Tintori said.

The wife of Lopez also criticized that the Maduro government did not open the borders so that Venezuela could receive medicines and supplies from the international community, including the "Rescue Venezuela" campaign, which her jailed husband asked her to begin.

She said that she has collected some "100,000 medical supplies" in a dozen countries, including diapers, baby formula, surgical material, gauze, alcohol, serum and cotton, to be delivered to hospitals in Venezuela.

According Tintori, there are still containers with some five hundred boxes of medicines that have not been delivered to their recipients.

Tintori also reported on the isolation her husband is kept in and questioned the "unnecessary and illogical" strip- searches he is subjected to at least ten times a day.

"He is isolated in a cell at 8 at night without light," she said.

She criticized that in the two years and seven months Lopez has been imprisoned, there have only been a few times that he has been able to speak with other prisoners.

Lopez, considered by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience, was accused in February 2014 of inciting violence "subliminally" at an anti-government march called by him, among other leaders.

On September 21, the Venezuelan Electoral Council announced the dates and conditions which will be held for the collection of signatures of necessary to result in a presidential recall, which requires 20% of the electorate.

After months of delays, according to the National Electoral Council, the referendum "could be held midway through the first quarter of 2017."

The deadline to end the Maduro presidency with a recall vote that would result in a new presidential election is January 10, 2017. A successful recall vote after that date would result in Maduro's hand-picked Vice President completing the remainder of his term.