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August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Donald J. Trump, President  
United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Greetings from Global Ministries, a common witness of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada and the United Church of Christ.

Global Ministries has been engaged in a relationship of solidarity and accompaniment with the people of Venezuela for more than 60 years. As such, we have walked alongside Venezuelans throughout various moments in the history of that nation. As we watched the news of the recent election, we would like to share with you our deep concern for the people of Venezuela and their future. We are deeply convinced that any US military intervention in Venezuela would exacerbate the current crisis and could bring back the darkest pages in the history of the country when the military overthrew civil governments to install dictatorships and *de facto* presidencies. Every time Venezuela has suffered a military episode in its recent times, the lives of the poorest and the most vulnerable population have been severely damaged.

Our partner church in the country, the Evangelical Pentecostal Union of Venezuela (UEPV), has expressed its worries about the current situation and the way it has already severely affected the peace of their members and congregations. One of UEPV's Bishops, Reverend Elida Quevedo, spoke of the need for a peaceful solution to the problems in Venezuela. The nation, she said, *"is already working on concrete mechanisms and proposals that can resolve the current political conflict that threatens the peace of the nation."* Bishop Quevedo also stated that, even though the conflict between the government and the opposition is confusing, *it is clear that the people of Venezuela do not want violence as a way to solve our problems and wish to have a peaceful and democratic solution to this situation."*

As church leaders who walk alongside those without voice, we strongly urge you to seek alternatives to military intervention in Venezuela, directly or indirectly. As people of God, we cherish the integrity of every human being and ask you to grant this respect to the people of Venezuela. We pray that the U.S. will not, by any

chance, direct or sponsor a military attack on Venezuela and will follow a path of respect, dialogue and reconciliation with the Venezuelan authorities.

As Jesus said "peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. (John 14:27, NRSV). Reflecting on this bible text, a Latin American theologian said that *"Wars and injustice provoke horror and fear, but we are called to become faithful witnesses to God's peace in today's world."* (Miguez, Nestor. "Go in Peace", Bible study 6, Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Busan, South Korea, 15 July 2013.)

May God guide you with wisdom and discernment both for the people of Venezuela and for all of God's creation.

Sincerely yours,



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in the United States and Canada



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