

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003297/25
to the Commission
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(26 August 2025)**

Subject: José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's ties to Maduro's narco-dictatorship

Zapatero has gone from being Spanish Prime Minister to being a defender of Venezuela's dictatorship, acting publicly as advisor to, and close associate of, both the dictatorship led by Maduro, head of the Soles cartel (drug trafficking crime group), and Pedro Sánchez, President of Spain, representing him in negotiations with other party leaders, including fugitive coup leader Puigdemont.

While Europe and the US call out Venezuela as a dictatorship involved in organised crime and transnational drug trafficking ⁽¹⁾, Zapatero travels to Caracas in the guise of 'mediator', lending international legitimacy to a criminal regime.

The US has doubled its reward for the capture of Maduro (USD 50 million), linking him to the Soles cartel and terrorist organisations such as Tren de Aragua and the Sinaloa cartel ⁽²⁾.

The involvement of Zapatero and his socialist accomplices provides Maduro with political oxygen. At the same time, Zapatero gains visibility, prominence and a source of income, with little concern for the fact that he is whitewashing one of the most wanted narco-dictators and selling out the democratic values of Spain and the European Union.

In view of the above:

Is the Commission concerned about the permanent and close ties between members of governing parties in Europe, such as Spain's PSOE, and regimes with proven links to drug trafficking?

Submitted: 26.8.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(23 October 2025)**

The position of the EU towards Venezuela was established in the Statement issued by the High Representative/Vice-President on behalf of the EU on 10 January 2025 ⁽¹⁾.

Despite developments since then, its main tenets remain valid: the EU stands in full solidarity with the people of Venezuela in their democratic aspirations.

The EU will continue to work with all Venezuelans, regional and international partners to foster genuine dialogue towards a democratic transition. Nicolás Maduro lacks the legitimacy of a democratically elected president.

The fight against organised crime and boosting cooperation with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in this domain remains a priority for the Commission, as stated by the Commission in its reply to Written Question E-000632/2025 ⁽²⁾.

To that end, the Commission and the European External Action Service will continue to deploy all efforts, through the appropriate institutional means.

¹ <https://2021-2025.state.gov/office-of-the-spokesperson/releases/2025/01/condemning-nicolas-maduros-illegitimate-attempt-to-seize-power-in-venezuela-and-announcing-new-actions-against-maduro-and-his-representatives-and-to-support-the-venezuelan-people/?safe=1>.

² <https://www.state.gov/reward-offer-increase-of-up-to-50-million-for-information-leading-to-arrest-and-or-conviction-of-nicolas-maduro>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/01/10/venezuela-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-events-of-10-january-2025/>.

⁽²⁾ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-000632-ASW_EN.html.