

Latin America's protests: Temporary social agitation or a sign of troubled democracy? | Democracy Digest

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Dube writes for the Wall Street Journal:

Today, Mr. Maduro appears in firm control. The opposition is grappling with a corruption scandal and its efforts to rekindle street protests have fallen flat. Venezuela's crisis-racked economy is showing subtle signs of improvement. And governments across Latin America are facing their own political turmoil, distracting from once-burgeoning international efforts to remove the Venezuelan strongman from power.

"Maduro is probably feeling better about himself right now than he has in the last several years," said Fernando Cutz, a former official of the U.S. National Security Council who worked on policy toward Venezuela. "I am less optimistic right now than I have been in the last three years. I don't see any reason to forecast that 2020 will bring positive change for the people of Venezuela."

But Elliott Abrams, the top U.S. envoy to Venezuela, says there is no sign of any change for the better.

Lantos Human Rights Commission adds:

Last October 18, Tony Hernández, the president's brother, was convicted by a Manhattan federal court of helping to import 200,000 kilos of cocaine into the United States and related charges. On September 8, Garifuna community leader Mirna Teresa Suazo Martínez was shot to death, the fourth Garifuna woman to be murdered in September and one of 17 Garifuna people killed this year alone. On November 27, television host José Arita was killed, the fourth killing of a journalist this year according to the Inter-American Press Association. Although formally a democracy, Freedom House rates Honduras as only partly free, and the country ranks 146 out of 180 on the World Press Freedom Index.

Please join the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission for a hearing on human rights and corruption in Honduras. Witnesses will examine the overall human rights situation in Honduras, including the causes of rights abuses and the relationship between human rights violations and corruption, and will offer recommendations for congressional action.