

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY FUNDING OF COUP
LEADERS IN VENEZUELA
2001-2004**

**This following information was prepared by Eva Gollinger, a lawyer and investigator located in New York. Eva Gollinger does not receive any funding from the Venezuelan government and has conducted this investigation independently. All documents cited below are available in the public domain. For more information, see www.venezuelafola.info.*

Recent documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") from the National Endowment for Democracy ("NED") about its programs and activities in Venezuela clearly evidence its financing of organizations and figures who notoriously led and figured in the April 2002 coup d'état against President Chávez. None of these individuals or organizations have ever publicly retracted or regretted their participation in the violent coup d'état that threatened Venezuela's democracy. Yet these same individuals continue to receive substantial annual grants from the NED to pursue their activities in Venezuela. Concrete examples include:

- Direct current NED grantees in Venezuela were members of the coup-government's "Advisory Council," as evidenced through their signing of the "Carmona Decree" during the brief coup-imposed government. The "Carmona Decree" is the public decree ratified in the Presidential Palace on April 12, 2002, that violated Venezuela's constitution and notions of democracy by deposing the elected President and Vice-President and dissolving all of Venezuela's democratic institutions, including the elected members of the National Assembly, the Supreme Court, the Attorney General and Public Defender, and an overwhelming number of laws and constitutional rights implemented during the Chávez Administration (Attached in ANNEX A). Those present NED grantees who signed the Decree and were part of the coup Advisory Council are:
 - Rocio Guijarrá, Director of CEDICE (a present NED grantee);
 - Along with the Center for International Private Enterprise, CEDICE received \$50,000 from NED in 2000-2001; \$73,033 and \$66,690 in 2002-2003 and \$116,525 and \$284,270 in 2003-2004 (post-coup). (ANNEX B)
 - María Corina Machado, President of Súmate (a present NED grantee);
 - Súmate received a NED grant of \$53,400 in September 2003 (post-coup). (ANNEX C)
 - Leopoldo López and Leopoldo Martínez (also named Minister of Finances by the coup government) of Primero Justicia, which receives training and support from the International Republican Institute, a direct NED grantee;

- IRI received \$300,000 in March 2002 for their work with Primero Justicia and received \$116,000 in February 2003 to continue this work (post-coup). (ANNEX D)
 - Maxim Ross and Domingo Alberto Rangel, both principal Committee Members on a major CIPE-CEDICE project funded by NED, the "Consensus to Build a National Agenda" taking place this year.¹
 - This project has been granted \$284,270 from NED (post-coup). (ANNEX B)
- The Director of the Asamblea de Educación, Leonardo Carvajal, was named "Minister of Education" by the Carmona coup government in April 2002, and he also signed a Civil Society Document published in national newspapers and read aloud publicly on national television and radio stations, reiterating the Carmona Decree and recognizing, applauding and supporting the legitimacy of the coup government on April 12, 2002. (ANNEX A). Mr. Carvajal's organization continued to receive direct NED funding through 2003, well after the coup, and he himself received a direct salary from the NED as part of this funding.¹¹
 - Carvajal's group received \$55,000 from NED in September 2000 and an additional \$57,000 in October 2002 (post-coup). (ANNEX E)
- Oscar Garcia Mendoza, Director of NED grantee Asociación Civil Liderazgo y Visión, authored two Official Communications published in national newspapers and pronounced on national television and radio in Venezuela on April 13, 2002, that not only recognized and supported the legitimacy of the Carmona coup government, but also celebrated its coming to power. (ANNEX A). This organization continues to receive NED funding to date.¹¹
 - This group received \$42,207 in September 2003 for work with Caracas' Metropolitan Police Force, notorious for its participation and collaboration in the April 2002 coup d'etat. (ANNEX F)
- Other individuals such as Cipriano Heredia of Visión Emergente, Tomás Pérez of Red Universitaria and Elías Santana of Alianza Cívica signed the Civil Society Document (above) recognizing the legitimacy of Carmona's coup government on April 13, 2002 (ANNEX A) and were recently chosen to spearhead a CIPE-CEDICE project, "Consensus to Build a National Agenda", funded by the NED.¹¹ (ANNEX B)
- The U.S. Department of State issued a \$1 million "Special Venezuela Funds" grant to the National Endowment for Democracy in April 2002 (post-coup), which was used to finance the organizations whose members and leadership had just led the April 2002 coup d'etat. (ANNEX G)
- The group Súmate was founded in 2003 after the April 2002 coup d'etat; the NED gave a grant of \$53,400 in September 2003 to Súmate to "observe" and "monitor" the signature collection process. Súmate's President, Maria Corina

Machado, signed the Carmona Decree and never retracted her participation or role in the April 2002 coup. (ANNEX B)

- o The NED's own documents contradict its attempts to classify Súmate as a mere observer or monitor in the recall referendum campaign. In their January 31, 2004 Report to the NED, Súmate explains their use of the project funds to "Train, capacitate and motivate the Municipal Coordinators to create a structural network and to utilize those Municipal Coordinators as instructors to provide technical training in the "Signature Drive" to those Responsible at the Centers of Signature Collection and/or the Signature Counters."
- o The same Súmate report to the NED explains how they developed an "Operations Manual for the Signature Drive" that was "utilized as the foundation to support the design and production of educative material used by the functionaries and volunteers that participated in the collection of signatures at the official centers."¹¹ It is hard to imagine that training the designated officials collecting signatures during the drive and providing technical operations manuals and materials to those functionaries in charge of the recall referendum signature drive is merely "observing and monitoring" the process. In fact, Súmate's own materials clearly indicate that not only are they the primary actors in the recall referendum campaign, but in fact, they are the leaders of this movement."
- o The financing of Súmate violates the NED's own regulations which prohibit financing partisan politics and political campaigns."¹²

See "Los Documentos del Golpe", Fundación Defensoría del Pueblo, 2004. See also:

<http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/CIBE-CEDICE/CIBE-CBDICE-Com/pages/CIBE-CEDICE-consensus-11.htm>

<http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/ACAde/2000-421/pages/ACAde-E48.htm>

<http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/ACAde/2000-421/pages/ACAde-D32.htm>

[http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/ACLV/ACLV-\(index.htm\)](http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/ACLV/ACLV-(index.htm))

<http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/CIBE-CEDICE/BuildingConsensus/pages/02-021-Consensus-04.htm>

<http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/SUMATE/2003-548QR-Sep-Dec03/pages/2003-548QR-Sep-Dec-13-14.htm>

<http://www.venezuelainfo.info/NED/SUMATE/2003-548QR-Sep-Dec03/pages/2003-548QR-Sep-Dec-13-15.htm>

¹¹ See also www.sumate.org, where the organization explains their role in the "collection and processing of signatures for the recall referendum drive" and

http://64.213.111.104/search?q=cache:Zus:ixDPWwQ1www:sumate.org/news/mar_2004_030406.pdf+sumate+of+mar+machado+del+sumate+del+LTC&hl=es, a press release announcing María Corina Machado as "Referendum Leader". Additionally, Súmate's own grant proposal, which was accepted by the NED, indicates one of

their project objectives as "promoting popular support for referenda." This clearly differs from the role of "observing."

¹² U.S. Statutes at Large, First Session of the 99th Congress, Public Law 99-93, Aug. 16, 1985, Sec. 505. Requirements Relating to the Endowment and Its Grants: (a) Partisan Politics. - (1) Funds may not be expended, either by the Endowment or by any of its grantees, to finance the campaigns of candidates for public office."