



NEWS
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MERCY CORPS STATEMENT ON THE POLITICIZATION OF U.S. AID TO VENEZUELA

**Statement by Provash Budden, Americas
Regional Director, Mercy Corps**

February 20, 2019

ABOUT MERCY CORPS

- Leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible
- Empowering people to survive through crisis, build better lives and transform their communities for good
- Meeting the urgent needs of today through emergency response and disaster preparedness
- Building a stronger tomorrow by connecting people to the resources they need to strengthen their community from within
- About 5,000 team members reaching nearly 28 million people
- \$471.8 million total operating revenue in FY2018; 86% channeled directly into programs in more than 40 countries

It is regrettable that aid has become a pawn in the political chess match between the governments of the United States and Venezuela. Aid should never be used as political bait – both the people who need it and those who risk their lives to deliver it deserve better.

We support any increase in humanitarian access and resources to help turn the tide against massive human suffering in Venezuela. Should aid make it into Venezuela, it is critical that local, impartial humanitarian groups distribute it to the people who need it most – including children, the sick, the elderly and the most impoverished. Decisions around who receives aid, and in which locations, must not be influenced or controlled by security forces or political actors. Those decisions instead should be guided by the level of need and must not put the people receiving it or distributing it in danger. No government should put humanitarian organizations in a position where they have to consider compromising fundamental humanitarian principles or safety to help people who desperately need it.

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