

USA Can't Beat China In South America | Dr. Ezequiel Bistoletti

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#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody. Today I'm happy to be joined once more by my friend and colleague Dr. Ezequiel Bistoletti from the wonderful Spanish-language YouTube channel *Demoliendo Mitos de la Política*, or in English, *Demolishing Political Myths*. Ezequiel, welcome back.

#Ezequiel

Hi Pascal, it's nice to be here again.

#Pascal

Ezequiel, you're Argentinian. You look at world affairs through a South American kind of prism. The United States—the Yankees—just invaded Venezuela. They killed about 80 Venezuelans, Cubans, and others who were there guarding the president, and then they kidnapped the president. Being from the region, how do you see that? I mean, what went through your mind when you heard the news?

#Ezequiel

Well, somehow I expected something like this to happen. But let me tell you, I'm Argentinian, of course, but I wrote my thesis about Venezuela and Chávez. I actually lived there while doing my field research, so I'm pretty familiar with the situation. I think, Pascal, to understand what happened, we have to start with a bigger picture—the terminal crisis of the unipolar order, the accelerated decline of the United States, the political struggles within the U.S., and, in that context, the emergence of Trump. And from there, four big changes in U.S. foreign policy.

That is a retreat in Europe, as everybody knows; a shift to China; an attempt to retreat in the Middle East—which is naturally impossible because of Israel—and, and this is the important part for America, a toughening in the American continent. That includes not only the Latin American part of the continent but also Canada and eventually Greenland as well. So, in that context, we have this attempt to reestablish a new kind of Monroe Doctrine—this “Dunrow Doctrine,” as they call it now. And, naturally, we see the attempt to seize all the opportunities and natural resources of the region.

But not only that—that’s a big part of it, but not the only dimension. You also have this intervention in Venezuela, along with many other indirect interventions taking place in Argentina, Chile, Colombia—wherever you go in Latin America. And I could even say that, with regard to Canada as well, there’s a struggle to somehow push China out of the picture. And China is, by a huge margin, the main trade partner of practically all countries in Latin America, the only exception being Mexico, naturally.

Nevertheless, its presence is growing there. So we have this attempt at a kind of “Monroe Doctrine 3.0.” We have the search for natural resources, but we also have this confrontation in the American continent with China. And naturally, there’s also an attempt to send a message to all the regional powers that might try to pursue a sovereign foreign policy. I’m talking here mainly about Mexico, but above all, this is a message to Brazil. In this context, the U.S. starts something that I now call blatant imperialism. The U.S. has always been imperialistic, particularly with regard to Latin America, but now this is a blatant type of imperialism. They don’t just do all the things they’ve always done; they now say, “Okay, we are going to run Venezuela.” That’s the wording that...

#Pascal

And that’s new, right? That’s new. They always tried to hide it—to put a kind of velvet, humanitarian glove over the iron fist of the United States. But they’ve stopped trying that. Now it’s just... no.

#Ezequiel

This patina of justifications that you had in the past—about democracy, capitalism, liberal freedom, and so on—simply disappears. You could say, of course, that they’re using narco-terrorism and drug trafficking as excuses, but even when they say that, five minutes later they’re openly admitting it’s actually about the oil, and that they’re going to run things there. On the same day this happened, we also had statements from Trump, Marco Rubio, and other top members of the U.S. administration about Greenland: “We need Greenland. We’re going to take Greenland.” And we also had, naturally, claims that there would be a new round of attacks against Iran. So this is what I call blatant imperialism, right?

We could also mention that since Trump came to power, I think he’s already carried out six or seven attacks. There’s Somalia, there’s Nigeria, there’s Syria, Yemen, now Venezuela—and it’ll continue like this. So this is a general situation, and in this context, at least on my channel, many of us analysts

were expecting something like this in Venezuela. We knew there wasn't going to be an open invasion. That's something the U.S. elite has learned from Iraq and Afghanistan: going in with boots on the ground sooner or later becomes a disaster. So what they do now is just attack, put pressure, and try to run things, as Trump said. At the same time, Pascal, what I see is a completely chaotic and anarchic imperialism.

So there's a total lack of strategic planning. One day they say one thing, and the next day they say exactly the opposite. In the case of Venezuela, I think they just went for it, hoping that this attack would suddenly bring about the fall of the Bolivarian regime. That's actually what they had predicted in their war simulations, according to the U.S. media, but it didn't happen. The vice president took power, as expected. The military remains loyal to the regime, and the streets are completely calm. In fact, the demonstrations we've seen within Venezuela were demonstrations in support of the Bolivarian government. So we have this blatant imperialism, but also a lot of mistakes and anarchy. And this is the situation they're in now—they need to negotiate with Venezuela.

#Pascal

And this is the situation they have. Do you have an idea of what actually went down? Because there's still this... this puzzlement, like, okay, why go in and take out only Mr. Maduro? Did the U.S.—does the U.S.—have a deal? Did they have a backdoor deal with Delcy Rodríguez, like, "Okay, we'll take him out, you become president, and then you do as we say, and we'll even tell everybody that's what's going to happen, and you just, you know, comply—or we'll do even worse things to you"? And she's basically on board. So it's basically an internal power struggle that Maduro also lost. Is that what happened? Or is she a chavista and actually, you know, her words are truthful, and the United States just, as you said, didn't realize that it's not just Maduro but an entire system? I mean, which interpretation do you lean toward?

#Ezequiel

There are three main possible interpretations—three possible hypotheses. The first one is that there was an agreement, right? "Let's take down Maduro, and somebody else comes up." That's the first one. Then there's the interpretation of possible treason—that someone committed treason, and that's why this happened so easily. It was surprising to see those helicopters flying around Caracas without anyone shooting, at least with a MANPADS. You know, you just need one person to fire one over the shoulder, a MANPADS against a helicopter. We didn't even see that. And then there's the third interpretation.

This is the one I lean toward so far. The idea is that they carried out this successful military intervention, expecting that everything would then follow—the collapse of the government—and from then on, they'd have control over Venezuelan oil. But that didn't happen. So the third

interpretation would be a miscalculation. Nevertheless, regardless of which interpretation is right among these three, the final result is the same. Even though they claim they're running things and will control all the Venezuelan oil, now they necessarily have to negotiate with Venezuela.

They're now in a position where they have to negotiate with Venezuela, and Venezuela, naturally, also has to negotiate with the U.S. But actually, Venezuela's position has always been open to negotiation. It was the U.S. that didn't want to negotiate with Venezuela. And talking about these strategic mistakes, these miscalculations—if you look at Venezuela's oil trade up until 2013 or 2014, around the time Chávez died—the vast majority of Venezuelan oil was sold to the U.S. That had always been the case. Venezuela even had its own refinery, called Citgo, in the U.S., refining Venezuelan oil, which is a very specific type of oil with a lot of sulfur, and it's... it's the opposite of light.

It's very heavy oil—that's the word. So this is how things were going, even with Chávez until he died. Chávez had a very nationalistic, very anti-imperialistic rhetoric, yet he always kept selling oil to the United States. And since 2014—I think this was under Obama—there were several waves of increasing sanctions because of this hostile policy toward Venezuela. The U.S. government and American oil industries started to retreat from Venezuela and could no longer trade as they used to, or at least not in the same amounts. So who is Venezuela selling its oil to nowadays? It's China—about 80%, right?

So you see here, Pascal, what I'm trying to say when I talk about these continuous, erratic, imperialistic interventions that try, for instance, to get control of the oil—but they actually bring about the opposite result. And we should remember that this is similar to what happened in Iraq in 2003. It's the Chinese who are exploiting the oil in Iraq now. So again, we see imperialism at play, but there's also a lot of chaos, a lot of unsystematic decision-making, a lack of strategic thinking. And now what we'll have, again, is a negotiation in which both sides will have to sit down and decide what to do with the oil in the current situation.

#Pascal

I mean, this is one of the reasons why some people interpret that the main reason for the United States to invade Venezuela is not to get its hands on the oil, but to stop Venezuela from selling oil in currencies other than U.S. dollars—to basically replace the Saudi petrodollar with a Venezuelan petrodollar and stabilize the international currency, rather than getting the actual oil. Do you put any thought into that kind of argument?

#Ezequiel

I think that, again, all of this is happening in the bigger context of the confrontation between the U. S. and China, in this shift from the old unipolar world order to the new multipolar one. So it's also naturally about China's presence in the region. When Trump started imposing tariffs on basically

every country, in the case of Latin America, the agreements that were finally reached were: okay, we'll stop these new tariffs, we'll suspend that, but you have to stop trading with China. That's what they imposed on Mexico. Something similar was said to Argentina. They tried to do that with Brazil, but they couldn't. They couldn't.

Brazil said, "OK, we will, if you put these tariffs on us." And the case of Brazil was particularly funny because there was no economic justification at all. They just said, "No, this is because the courts in Brazil have condemned Bolsonaro, who is a friend of Trump." But Brazil was able to say, "OK, we don't trade with you anymore. We trade with China, with India, with Russia, with the BRICS, and with the rest of the world." So they had to retreat—just as the U.S. had to retreat with China, with India, and with all the countries that somehow had the strength to support their own sovereignty.

And the question of the dollar also naturally plays a role. All this trading that's taking place between the BRICS countries and, let's say, the Global South—because there are several countries that don't officially belong to the BRICS but are coming closer and closer—is happening more and more in different currencies, in national currencies. And the U.S. knows that its global hegemony, on a large scale, is based on the use of the dollar. So this also plays a role. I don't think these things contradict each other; they're all part of the same scheme.

#Pascal

So what does this mean for Latin America now? I mean, Trump—I think they even said outright, "This is our hemisphere." Does Latin America actually go along and say, "Yeah, sure, we're your hemisphere, United States of America," the way you said America only belongs to you because you are America? Is this going to go down smoothly, and now everybody's so scared they're going to lick Donald Trump's boots? Or, from what you're reading and hearing, what's the reaction now in the region?

#Ezequiel

Well, I think the world, including Latin America, has reacted to this based on the two poles that are emerging again in the context of the bigger picture—the struggle between the U.S. and China and the BRICS. Just as you saw Europe have a rather pathetic reaction to this, they didn't even mention the name of the U.S. or care to recall state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and all those things they're always talking about with regard to Ukraine. They didn't mention any of that in this case. They aligned with the U.S., while Russia and China aligned against it.

And Latin America, if you look at the picture, is now clearly divided in two. You have half of Latin America that reacted against this, and that includes Mexico and Brazil, arguably together with Argentina. These are the three middle powers in Latin America. You have Colombia repudiating this

as well. And on the other side of the continent, you have Argentina under Milei, who basically does everything Trump tells him to do. And you have Kast in Chile, the new president—I think he hasn't taken office yet, but he'll align with the U.S. as well. So this struggle is taking place there.

And somehow this has always been taking place—a struggle between the hard hegemony of the U.S. on the continent and those political forces that fight against it. But probably the new dimension of this is the direct intervention we see even in countries where the U.S. isn't intervening militarily, like in Venezuela. I can give you the example of Argentina and what happened a few months ago. We had the midterm elections, and Milei was going to lose those elections. It was very clear the economy was about to collapse once again, and Trump blatantly intervened in the electoral process, saying he would save Argentina with a bailout.

And if he didn't do so, Argentina would have to declare default again, and it would be chaos. So this scared people, and finally about 50% of the citizens voted for him in an election where only 60% of the population participated. So, in the end, it's only about 30% of the citizenry in Argentina. But still, people changed their minds over the last week and voted for Milei. This is a kind of intervention that you didn't have in the past, at least not so openly. So this is what's going on now—an open struggle within the Latin American countries. But I don't need to mention that, historically, no one likes to have boots on their own country.

#Pascal

No, that's not true. The Europeans love it—they love the occupation. They do. They praise it, they honor it, they pay tribute to it. There are those who do.

#Ezequiel

That's a good point you're making. I rectify—I correct myself. But neither in Mexico nor in Brazil or Argentina is this the case either. There's a long history of anti-imperialist movements, and I'm not talking only about small leftist groups or anything like that. This is somehow embedded in the big political parties and major political movements. There are also no military bases in these countries, and there won't be, because even those who support a close U.S. policy in these countries wouldn't allow that. They would consider it a breach of sovereignty. So this is a struggle that's ongoing. The new thing is this blatant intervention by the U.S. But again, you have to remember the history of anti-imperialist sentiment in Latin America as well.

#Pascal

So, switching back to Venezuela, one of the fears is that this might cause a civil uprising, maybe even a civil war, if power in Venezuela fractures into different groups. Do you think those fears are warranted, or is the Rodríguez presidency going to be able to keep everything together?

#Ezequiel

So far, I'm not seeing that—not seeing that at all. This doesn't mean that Delcy Rodríguez will have an easy time. But I don't think the big problem for Delcy Rodríguez now is possible civil uprisings. You have to remember that most people who were against the government have already left Venezuela. They control the military, and they have a lot of supporters—that has to be said. I think a government, a regime that distributes four million rifles among the population, is not a regime hated by its people, because otherwise those weapons would be used against it. So that's not something I see coming, but I could be wrong. I don't see civil uprisings in the near future, but I do see a difficult situation regarding this "quarantine," as they call it now, of oil exportation, because Venezuela is tremendously dependent on oil exports.

I could only understand it when I was there. If you go to the supermarket and want to buy butter, you won't find Venezuelan butter—you'll buy either French butter or butter from Uruguay, for instance. What they do, what they produce, is oil. They get money. In the past, this was dollars, and then they bought everything they needed. So if you cut the oil, you have an economic problem. That's why the sanctions were terrible for Venezuela. They started in 2014—actually, they began before that, but they became much bigger, much deeper since then. And in the years before, during the period when Chávez was in power, what he had done was basically nationalize oil, even though in Venezuela oil was never officially privatized.

But PDVSA, the public oil company, was in the hands of managers who didn't respond to the government but actually to the U.S. multinational oil companies. So what Chávez managed to do was take back control of PDVSA and change the margins that the oil was producing. In the past, it was something like 20% for Venezuela and 80% for the multinationals, and he inverted that. It became 80% for Venezuela and 20% for the oil companies. And it's kind of funny to see that after this move by Chávez, not a single company—neither American nor Brazilian (the Brazilians were there with Petrobras), nor Repsol, the Spanish oil company—none of them left the country, because even with that 20%, they still made excellent profits.

But Chávez started to use this money and redistribute it. Until 2013, inequality dropped, poverty dropped, and the economy grew. So the situation was much better than it had been in the past. Then, well, he died, and the sanctions started. Oil production and exports decreased from 3 million barrels a day to half a million, and that was disastrous for Venezuela. After that, with Delcy Rodríguez as energy minister, they managed to slowly start recovering, with the help of the Chinese and Chinese investment. They didn't even have money after the sanctions to buy the necessary parts they needed for oil extraction.

This is how bad the sanctions were. Right now, they're producing around a million barrels of oil a day, and it's growing, and the economy has been recovering. Since 2021 or 2022, they've had very high growth rates after the huge loss they suffered when the sanctions started. Now they're in this situation, going back to the present, where they can't export oil anymore because their tankers are

being seized. Yesterday, two tankers were seized again. So I think that's the main card Trump has to play now, right? They're going to have very strong economic problems very soon, so they'll be negotiating under pressure, for sure.

But again, the U.S. is also forcefully negotiating because they say, "Yeah, we control Venezuela," but they don't control Venezuela, and they don't want to invade it. They could destabilize and destroy it, but then they'd destroy the oil production. So they also need to negotiate by force. And this is the situation we're in now. This shows, again, the lack of planning, the lack of strategic thinking that the Trump government has. There's apparently no plan. They just react. They think, "OK, Marco Rubio says, 'Mr. Trump, we have to invade.' OK, let's invade." And then what do we do? They don't even know what to do. So is it...

#Pascal

Is it a bit like what happened with Iran? Okay, go in, send the airplanes, blow up a nuclear site, declare victory, go back—but actually you lost track of 400 kilograms of, well, kilograms, I think, not totems, but 400 kilograms of highly fissile nuclear material. And here, you take out Maduro because you've made him into this boogeyman and declare victory. But in fact, you barely save face. And then you try to keep going with the bullying strategy. But it's... Is that your interpretation?

#Ezequiel

That's what I'm seeing now, Pascal. I know the mainstream media is showing this differently everywhere. They're showing a very strong U.S., a very strong president. But what I see is the U.S. destroying the world order that it created after the Second World War—an order that actually favors the U.S.—and they're destroying it. With regard to Trump, what I see is someone who comes across as a very strong man, but actually has a lot of internal contradictions, and the MAGA base is against this.

And this is something that could also be discussed, because the voters—the so-called Latino voters in Florida, which is a very important swing state for the elections—are in favor of this. But the main MAGA base is against the intervention, not because they like Venezuela or are against imperialism. They're against it because they think U.S. interventions have been very bad for the U.S., and they're right about that. So what I see is chaos. I see contradictions. I see a big giant falling down and throwing punches everywhere. And this is a very dangerous situation, naturally.

#Pascal

How do you think the relationship between not only Venezuela and China, but also Latin America and China, is going to develop from here on? And as a follow-up question, why is it impossible? I mean, Venezuela has no pipelines leading south to export oil through other outlets. Is it really just the coast?

#Ezequiel

There were plans when Chávez was in power, and Lula and Kirchner too, over 10 or 15 years. There was this idea of a pipeline throughout all of South America, but it was never built—it would have cost a huge amount of money. The only way Venezuela exports its oil is through tankers. But with regard to China, this is a lost battle for the U.S. Regardless of how much they intervene, militarily or not, China will always win—just as it's winning in the world economy. And the only reason it's winning is because China offers a much better deal than the one the U.S. offers.

China goes to your country—be it Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, or any African country—and says, “Okay, we’re going to trade with you, we’re going to invest, we’re going to make money.” They don’t do charity, not at all, but they do win-win deals. They invest, and we’re going to profit from that investment. We’re going to get natural resources; probably you’re going to buy our products as well. But we do construct something there, we build something there, we invest there, we develop the economy. So it’s a win-win situation. And the relationship the U.S. has always had with Latin America is basically pure exploitation—if not, in extreme cases, military intervention.

But I can talk for hours about the Argentinian case. What you have is the U.S. trying to prevent Latin American economies from developing industrially. They use the debt mechanism—basically foreign debt—as a way to stop countries from developing. And who would doubt for a second which is the better option? Either this relationship with the U.S., which hinders and does everything it can to keep you from developing your economy, putting a boot on your head with debt, or a win-win deal with China. These are the two models in conflict here, and the Chinese model will always win.

#Pascal

But it seems that the United States is making a different bet, right? They're saying, “No, we can change regimes—presidents—either through influence campaigns or military interventions. Then they’ll be forced to stop economic interactions with China. We can chase China out by just scaring Latin America enough.” And it works with, I mean, Milei—I think Milei counts quite a couple of things.

#Ezequiel

But Pascal, Milei is the best example of that not working. When he came to power, Milei was the number one fan of the U.S., and, well, he's basically an occupying government in Argentina. And when he came to power, he said, “Oh, we’re going to stop all relations with China.” But he immediately realized, once he was in power, that if he stopped all the commercial, economic, and financial ties with China, the economy would collapse. He would actually have to declare the end of debt payments. So what did he do?

He had to backtrack and say—he even said—“Oh, I’m surprised now that I’ve traveled to China, that the Chinese economy is working so well under capitalist premises.” He’s a big defender of wild

capitalism, so he couldn't push the Chinese out of Argentina, because otherwise the economy and his government would collapse. And that's what would happen in any other Latin American country. You can try to strong-arm the Chinese in Latin America—that's what the U.S. is doing—but it's not the smartest move, and they'll lose. They should try to negotiate, but... who am I to say this in the eyes of Trump, right?

#Pascal

Yeah, but now, in the process, he's also tearing down the entire fabric of the international system—the very system the U.S. built itself. I just had a talk with Ambassador Sándor Kuksai from Hungary, and he said, "Look, this is a watershed. In forty years, we haven't had a moment like this." The U.S. is now withdrawing from over sixty-six international organizations, thirty-one of them inside the U.N. It's a frontal attack on the system itself—the one that keeps not only world trade flowing. I mean, the attack on the WTO, the World Trade Organization, is quite old, but now it's everything else too, including diplomatic norms and institutions. So... I mean, do you interpret this as a bit like Rome—Rome is burning and Nero is still singing? Because it will destroy whatever the U.S. used to rely on to project power.

#Ezequiel

I see it just the way you do, Pascal. The worst thing about this is how dangerous the situation is. Yes—because in this context of Rome falling, well, there could be a nuclear war at any time. There's not that potential in Latin America, even though the current situation is naturally pushing countries to rearm. And let's not forget that Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina all have nuclear technology, and they've decided on their own not to develop it militarily—but they eventually could. But let's put Latin America aside.

In any other country where the U.S. is intervening, there's always the possibility of an escalation—and that escalation could become nuclear. I think the fall of Iran is one of them. It could be Ukraine. It could be Taiwan. But there are too many fronts open, with too many chances, too many probabilities of a nuclear escalation. This is an extremely dangerous situation. And every time I talk about my prospective analysis for 2026, I remember saying last year that 2025 would be worse than 2024, and 2024 worse than 2023. And now it's worse than 2025. So it's a continuous escalation. And this is very, very dangerous, as you know.

#Pascal

Yes, this is why I'm getting very desperate, because I always thought there would be a way out—you know, that at least when it comes to superpower confrontation, the new administration would be more level-headed. And they started off that way, saying, "OK, we need to reach an

arrangement, we need to have a deal with Beijing and Moscow,” and so on. But by now it seems that all of that is kind of gone, and even attacks on Vladimir Putin’s private residence are on the cards.

The further militarization of Taiwan, with this huge military deal, is... well, Japan kind of did what Japan did on its own. That was just dumb. I put that a little bit aside and separate—I don’t think that was U.S.-orchestrated. That was indigenous stupidity. But now Latin America and the U.S. are kind of saying, “You belong to us, or else.” It just seems like a very poor strategy, and so insanely dangerous. I wish there were some silver lining. Can you throw me a silver lining? Let me put it this way.

#Ezequiel

Firstly, let me remind you of the seizure of that Russian tanker yesterday. It’s reported that Russia sent a submarine—it’s not really clear if that happened, but that’s another possible escalation. I think what Latin American governments have to do now is, as I always recommend, unite—because united we are stronger. We’ll never be as strong as the U.S., but if we are united, everything becomes more difficult for the U.S. if they try to intervene in our countries. And then we basically have to create alliances with the emerging powers, without completely breaking our relations with the U.S. The message to the U.S. has to be clear: if you want to have friendly relations with us—and nobody in Latin America hates the U.S. or anything like that—we just demand to be respected, to be treated with respect.

That’s all. If you want to have good relations with us, let’s go ahead—let’s have those good relations. But at the same time, we have to create bigger alliances with China and Russia. We have to unite and become stronger through unity. And by the way, talking about China and Russia, this incident yesterday is creating a lot of turmoil within both countries. People are saying, “It’s over with moderation. The U.S. has to be stopped with this blatant imperialism.” I don’t know if that would be the wisest move. I honestly don’t know what to do, because if China and Russia react now, they’d probably escalate the situation. But at the same time, it’s also true that if they don’t, their moderation will be interpreted as weakness by the Trump government. So this is the dangerous situation we were talking about, right?

#Pascal

I still had some hope that China would just cut off the rare earths and seriously impede the United States in its, you know, war-making capacity, because that’s a very, very weak spot. But apparently the U.S. found a way to convince China not to do so. Sorry, but one last point, maybe. On Twitter, I read a lot of messages from supposed Venezuelans who celebrate the fall of Maduro and say that if you haven’t suffered under the regime, then shut up—you have no right to speak. Because he was a terrible dictator, and it’s just like with Saddam Hussein, right? People are glad he’s gone, and everybody’s celebrating in the streets. From your own experience with Venezuela, what would you

say—roughly—how many percent of Venezuelans inside and outside the country were against the Chavista regime, and how many are kind of backing it up? And where's the middle, just roughly?

#Ezequiel

It's very difficult to say, but the Chávez government still has a lot of support. You have to remember as well that when people say, "Oh, we want freedom, we want democracy," well, it's difficult to talk about freedom and democracy when a country is being attacked, just like Venezuela is. Not now militarily, naturally, but in the past the sanctions and the hostile policy of the U.S. have been tremendous. Part of the opposition also tried to take insurrectionary paths, which created an escalation where both the opposition and the government hardened their positions.

And so this is the context. I don't know—it's very hard to say a percentage. A lot of people support the government, a lot of people repudiate it. But what I'm trying to say is that the context this government has to deal with is not a normal one. If you look at the situation of Venezuela during the Chávez years, from 1999 until 2013—actually, this is why a lot of people still support the government—they had improved their living conditions, especially poor people, but also the middle classes, dramatically.

So this is what happens every time there's some kind of alternative approach, a model of development, or anything that resembles economic sovereignty—it has to be destroyed. This is the experience of Venezuela. I'm not saying the Maduro government didn't commit crimes or anything like that; I'm not denying that. The opposition also did terrible things, killing people as well. What we see is this escalation of violence. It was stopped over the last few years as Venezuela started growing again. But when we talk about how many people support it and how many do not, it's very difficult, Pascal. It's extremely difficult.

#Pascal

Okay, fair enough, fair enough. It's not possible to give precise numbers on something like this. I mean, it would need a huge census and a lot of research, but this was very helpful. Ezequiel, for people who want to read or hear more from you, they should first and foremost go to your YouTube channel, I suppose. If they speak Spanish, then **Demoliendo Mitos de la Política**. If they speak English, you also have an English-language channel, right?

#Ezequiel

Yeah, we're trying to upload everything we do in Spanish, dubbed with artificial intelligence. We have a little delay of a few days, but we're working on it. So **Demoliendo Mitos** for those who speak Spanish, and **Demolishing Myths** for those who speak English. They can follow me there.

#Pascal

Go and find Dr. Ezequiel Bistoletti. Ezequiel, thank you very much for your time today. A pleasure, as always.