



Institute of Chinese Studies

WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

*The Venezuelan Crisis
and its Implications
for China's Worldview*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker:

Gunjan Singh

28 January 2026

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Speaker: Dr. Gunjan Singh, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Law School, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat.

Chair: Dr. Hemant Adlakha, Vice-Chairperson and Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi; and, former Associate Professor, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The seminar delved into the implications of the US' military operation in Venezuela, which resulted in the abduction of the incumbent President Nicolás Maduro. It also looked at China's expanding role in the larger Latin American region, the fallout of US actions against this dynamic, and the shifts in the international rules-based order.
- Dr. Gunjan Singh highlighted President Xi Jinping's new year speech which had emphasised China's willingness to work with all countries to advance peace, and build a community of shared future for humanity. She also noted that Foreign Minister Wang Yi's speech reiterated China's commitment to fostering an amicable, secure and prosperous neighbourhood as well as upholding UN institutions and international law.
- Characterising the American operation in Venezuela as a challenge to Xi's perspective of world peace, the speaker stated that the initial reaction of China was to condemn the breach of international law and state its support for Venezuelan sovereignty. However, this has not materialised into any concrete steps. The speaker also referred to the white paper released by China on its relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean, which delineated multiple levels of cooperation and presented a roadmap of Chinese engagement in the region.
- The speaker argued that American actions represented an unambiguous blocking of China's access to Venezuelan oil resources, with President Donald Trump announcing

his intention to re-route them to the US. Dr Singh drew attention to the fact that China had gained access to these resources through billions of dollars in loans and that China has also invested large amounts in building infrastructure in Latin America and extending aid and credit. The dual-use nature of Chinese infrastructure in the region has been a cause for concern for the US.

- Dr. Singh further argued that unilateral US actions, described as bullying and hegemonic in nature, could make regime change in Venezuela a catalyst for pushing Latin America toward China as a more viable and responsible trading partner. This situation may allow China to champion its position as the “voice of the Global South” and as a bulwark of upholding the international rules-based order. In this manner, China may be able to posture itself as a peaceful alternative to the United States.
- The Chair, Dr. Hemant Adlakha, in his closing remarks, also highlighted how US interests have shifted from containment of China to attacks that attempt to cripple it, as seen by an earlier attack on a Venezuelan oil tanker bound for China. He also emphasised the importance accorded to this issue in high-level meetings of the Chinese establishment, where it was assessed as a major challenge to Chinese diplomacy.

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