

## Who is president Chávez?

- Chávez led two military coups in 1992 where hundreds were killed
- He and his allies were sent to prison but in 1994 they were pardoned by President Caldera



- Once free, Chávez promised to eliminate the corruption and poverty and he won elections based on his promises.
- But he did not deliver what he promised: More than 45% of private companies existing in 1998 went out of business; there is 25% of unemployment (Only 15% of the population has formal jobs!).
- He modified the constitution (2001) to extend the length of the presidential period and to allow immediate reelection
- He has focused efforts on the implementation of his "Revolution", using state resources for propaganda and ideological programs
- Chávez has extended his power over all the public powers in Venezuela (Judiciary, Legislative and Electoral). There is no independence of Powers !!



April 11, 2002

Close to one million people asked President Chávez resignation in the largest rally ever seen in Venezuela



It was a peaceful demonstration, full of flags, banners and chants. Some people even brought their children along...



The Demonstrators headed towards the Presidential Palace, where a group of government supporters (many of them armed) awaited to "defend" the president.



The gunmen who were filmed in video went to trial but they were found not guilty, due to "insufficient evidence". Even before the trial was over, the president appeared in TV calling them "heroes"....



19 people were killed and more than one hundred were hurt on April 11, 2002. Some from the opposition, some of them President's supporters. There is evidence that there were snipers shooting from the roofs of buildings around the presidential palace (note that president's guards control the access to these buildings). There was a chopper from the State Political & Security Police (DISIP) flying the area with a camera (there is evidence of this in video). Nevertheless, three years after the killing, the government has failed to clarify the events and to identify the responsables ... Is this incompetence? Or maybe they just don't want the public to know the truth...



The only ones in jail so far are a few policemen who were guarding the demonstration of the opposition and returned the fire when they were attacked. In Venezuela the judiciary power acts very differently if the accused opposes or supports the government.