

# *Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro Says the Far-Right Will Be Punished at the Ballot Box*

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Caracas, May 27 (teleSUR-RHC) --The Venezuelan people will cast a “punishment vote” against the ultra-right at parliamentary elections at the end of the year, the country’s president, Nicolas Maduro, said on Tuesday. The democratically-elected head of state told teleSUR that the poor will play a key role at the polls.

“There is going to be a great punishment vote in the parliamentary elections. A great punishment vote. But it is not how the aristocrats tell it, against the government. No. The punishment vote will be against the right, against the violence, against the ultra-right. And against everything they represent,” he said in a phone call to teleSUR. “They will see how our campaign, of raising the hopes and... mobilizing the people: the most humble will be given the power, so it will once again be successful.”

The ruling socialist party has been in power in Venezuela for more than 15 years in which time living conditions for the poorest have improved immeasurably. In March, Venezuelan Social Development Minister Hector Rodriguez announced the level of extreme poverty in the country had dropped to a record low of 5.4 percent in 2014. The figures are the latest milestone in poverty reduction in Venezuela, following the prioritizing of social investment.

When President Hugo Chavez came to power in 1998, 21 percent of homes were registered as experiencing extreme poverty and earlier that decade, as economic crisis hit Venezuela, extreme poverty topped 42 percent. The objective of the socialist government's policy is to reduce the extreme poverty index to zero by the year 2019.

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