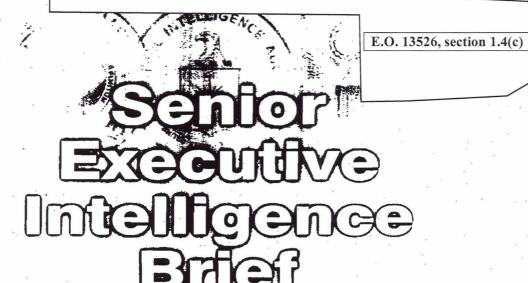
APPROVED FOR RELEAST DATE: MAR 2007



The SEIB must be returned to CIA within 5 working days



## Tuesday, 5 March 2002

**National Security Information** 

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## CIAPASS SEIB 42-452CHX

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E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)

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	to the appeal	
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AMERICAS	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Venezuela:	Chavez Beleaguered, but Opposition Divided E.O. 13526, sec	tion 1.4(c)
	Opposition to President Chavez is mounting. A public opinion poll last	*
	month indicates 53 percent of Venezuelans want Chavez to step down, up	
	from 36 percent last August. Calls for his resignation by public officials	
*	and private-sector leaders are becoming daily occurrences.	389
* .	- Even some of Chavez's former allies are turning on him. Luis	
1,	Miquilena, Chavez's political mentor and former Interior Minister,	
	is working with opposition groups trying to persuade Chavez to	
		1:4( )
	resign, E.O. 13526, section $1.4(c)(d)$ E.O. 13526, section	n 1.4(c)
18:		
*	The military also is divided in its support for Chavez. The high command	
	publicly backs the President, E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)(d)	
E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)(d)		
2.0. 13320, section 1.4(c)(u)	<b>-</b>	
	<ul> <li>A successful coup would be difficult to mount. The military cherishes</li> </ul>	
	its apolitical role, E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)(d) and the	
i ŝ a	armed forces as an institution would only move against the President	
	after a blatant abuse of power, such as disbanding the legislature.	
	E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)	* v
	Venezuela's worsening economy will fuel additional discord. The cost of	
	basic consumer goods—about 70 percent of which are imported—is rising	51
9	because of last month's currency devaluation, cutting into Chavez's support	9
The second secon	among poor Venezuelans, his core constituency. Declining real wages will	x 8
4	embolden already hostile labor unions.	
	— The opposition is planning demonstrations this spring, including	0.0
	a general strike scheduled for 18 March. E.O. 13526, see	ction 1.4(c)
e i	2.0. 13320, 30	tron mile)
	Opposition leaders are not unified and lack a singular strategy for replacing	
	Chavez. Most opposition leaders are seeking a constitutional mechanism	1
a ·		* .
	for removing him, but existing legal means, such as impeachment, are	* 2 2
	cumbersome. Chavez's control over the National Assembly has helped stall	
	legislation that would enable recall votes at the midpoint of a president's	
	term	
	E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)	£ .
9 × **		
	8 .*	
n Sen		. 1
		90
ŧ	F.O. 12526 section 1.4(a)	
*	E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)	140
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