

## Venezuela, UNICEF Sign Agreement on Youth, Adolescent Programs

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**The Venezuelan Government and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) signed a funding agreement which seeks to improve research and state-run programs geared towards combating issues in the area of youth and adolescent education, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, and public health**

The agreement was signed by María Cristina Perceval, UNICEF's regional representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, during her visit to Venezuela.

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Perceval said UNICEF was willing to partner with the country's government because it demonstrated a willingness "to multiply the work that the agency has been doing consistently and determinedly in face of the challenges faced by children and adolescents around the world and in the nation's territory."

She added, that UNICEF is working partner with other governments to improve the conditions at-risk children and adolescents face in Latin America, which is one of "the most violent region for children in the world".

Jorge Arreaza, Venezuela's Foreign Minister, and Aristobulo Isturiz, the country's Minister of Communes and Social Protection, were on hand for the signing of the agreement with Perceval. Both spoke with Perceval at length about various issues vulnerable groups are facing due to the economic and financial sanctions led by the United States and supported by the European Union and other allies that, which have resulted in shortages of basic good, medical supplies, and increased inflation.

Arreaza explained the agreement, which will remain in place two years will allow the country to receive USD \$32 million to fund various programs with the Venezuelan State providing additional technical and logistic support.

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Following the signing of the agreement, Perceval met with Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro at the Miraflores Palace. Maduro said the meeting was fruitful in a post to Twitter after it took place since officials were able to explain at length various issues the country was currently facing in an open and frank manner.