The thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of the U.S. government, the U.S. Department of the Navy or the Naval War College.
continental and insular territory included between Colombia and Costa Rica, in accordance with the boundary treaties concluded by Panama with those Republics.

The jurisdictional limitations stipulated in the public treaties negotiated prior to this Constitution are recognized.

**ARTICLE 4.** The Republic of Panama respects the norms of international law.

**ARTICLE 118.** The legislative functions of the National Assembly consist in enacting the laws necessary for the fulfillment of the ends and the exercise of the functions of the State declared in this Constitution, and especially the following: ...

5th. To approve or disapprove public treaties negotiated by the Executive.

8th. To declare war and empower the Executive to negotiate peace

**ARTICLE 144.** Powers that the President of the Republic must exercise with the co-operation of the respective Minister, of the Cabinet Council, or of the permanent legislative committee, as the case may be, are: ...

8th. To direct foreign relations; to accredit and receive diplomatic agents and consuls as well as to negotiate public treaties and conventions, which will be submitted to the consideration of the National Assembly.

**ARTICLE 231.** No foreign Government or foreign official or semi-official entity or institution may acquire ownership over any part of the national territory.


[Venezuela, Ministry of Interior Relations, *Constitución Nacional* (1947).]

Translation]

**Preliminary Declaration.**—The Venezuelan Nation proclaims as the basic reason of its existence the spiritual, political, and economic liberty of man, based on human dignity, social justice, and the equitable participation of all the people in the enjoyment of the national wealth.

From that fundamental reason the Nation derives its functions of defense, of law, and of culture, for the achievement of its essential aims, consisting chiefly of: ...

the affirmation of its own nationality, in sustained harmony with paternal cooperation in the concert of nations for the
purposes of peace and progress, and with mutual respect of sovereignty;
the support of democracy as the only and irrevocable system for governing its internal relations, and peaceful collaboration for the purpose of promoting that system in the government and relations of all peoples of the earth.

The Venezuelan Nation repudiates war, conquest, and the abuse of economic power as instruments of international policy; it reaffirms its desire to settle all conflicts and controversies with other states by pacific means established in pacts and treaties to which it is a party; it endorses the principle of self-determination of peoples, and recognizes international law as an adequate rule for guaranteeing the rights of man and of nations in the terms and for the purposes of the present Declaration.

**Article 20.** . . . Foreigners are obliged to respect legal precepts on the same terms as are demanded of Venezuelans, while they reside in the territory of the Republic.

**Article 21.** Without prejudice to the dispositions in international agreements, foreigners have in Venezuela the duties and rights accorded to them by this Constitution and the laws; but neither the former not the latter can be greater than the duties and rights of Venezuelans.

The laws may establish restrictions with respect to the exercise of the rights belonging to all foreigners or to a determined class of them, when serious reasons of interior or exterior security or reasons of a sanitary nature so demand.

Confiscation can only be imposed on foreigners, and only in case of conflict with their country.

**Article 33.** The Nation recognizes asylum for political reasons, with only the limitations established by law, the principles of international law, and public treaties.

**Article 104.** The Nation will cooperate in the international community for the realization of the ends of common security and defense, in conformity with the provisions of this Constitution and of international pacts duly approved and ratified.

**Article 105.** Treaties, conventions, and agreements concluded by the Executive Power must be approved by the National Congress in order to have validity, except where they deal with executing or perfecting pre-existing obligations of the Republic, with applying principles expressly recognized by it, with the execution of ordinary acts of international relations, or with the exercise of powers expressly attributed by law to the Executive Power.
Nonetheless, the Permanent Committee of the National Congress may authorize the provisional execution of international treaties and agreements whose urgency so requires; such treaties and agreements will in every case be submitted for the later approval or disapproval of the Legislative Chambers.

In every case the National Executive will give an account of the treaties, conventions and agreements concluded by it, with a precise indication of their character and contents, to the Legislative Chambers at their next sessions, whether or not they are subject to the approval of the Chambers.

**Article 106.** In the international engagements contracted by the Republic there shall be inserted a clause whereby the parties oblige themselves to decide by the pacific means recognized in international law or previously agreed on by them, if such be the case, controversies which may arise between such parties with respect to the interpretation or execution of the treaty, whenever it is judged necessary considering the nature of such treaty or whenever the procedure which must be followed for its conclusion permits.

**Article 107.** No contract of national, state, or municipal public interest can be concluded with foreign governments, nor transferred to them in whole or in part. Nor can such contracts be concluded with companies which are not domiciled in Venezuela, nor can contracts made with third persons be transferred to them.

To conclude such contracts with foreign official or semi-official entities with autonomous juridical personality, or to transfer them to such entities in whole or in part, in each case the authorization is required of the Legislative Chambers, or of the Permanent Committee if they are urgent and the Chambers are in recess.

**Article 108.** In the contracts referred to by the previous article, if it is in accord with their nature, a clause shall be considered to be incorporated even where it is not express by which it is established that the doubts and controversies which may arise concerning said contracts and which are not amicably solved by the contracting parties shall be decided by the competent tribunals of Venezuela, in conformity with its laws, and shall not for any reason be able to give rise to foreign claims.

**Article 138.** The competence of the national power shall extend to:
1. The international acts of the United States of Venezuela as a sovereign nation.

ARTICLE 162. The Legislative Chambers as co-legislative bodies shall have the following attributions:

1. To approve or disapprove international treaties, conventions, or agreements which are subject to this requirement in conformity with Article 105 of this Constitution; . . .

ARTICLE 198. The attributions and duties of the President of the Republic are: . . .

2. To represent the Nation in its relations with the other nations, to name the diplomatic and consular agents of the Republic, and to receive the diplomatic representatives of other States;

3. To direct, through the appropriate Minister, the foreign relations of the Republic and diplomatic negotiations, and to conclude through plenipotentiaries designated by him in the Council of Ministers treaties, conventions or agreements with other nations.

4. To adhere, with the approval of the Permanent Committee of the Congress and of the Council of Ministers, to multilateral treaties which are of interest to the Republic and to sign, in the name of Venezuela, through plenipotentiaries designated by him, those in whose preliminary discussions Venezuela has participated;

5. To submit to the approval of the Legislative Chambers the treaties, conventions, and agreements for which such approval is required, to ratify them, to exchange or deposit ratifications, and to put the treaties, conventions, and agreements into execution when there is opportunity;

7. To adopt the necessary measures for the defense of the Republic, the integrity of its territory and its sovereignty in case of international emergency, and to give execution to the obligations resulting from pacts for the common security and defense to which the Republic is a party, when he shall be required to do so. In these cases he will urgently request the convocation of the Congress in extraordinary sessions, if it is not meeting, and will give it an account of all that has been done and will propose the measures he deems necessary;

8. To prohibit the entrance of foreigners into the national territory or to expel them in the cases provided for by this Constitution or by the laws of the Republic or permitted by international law; . . .