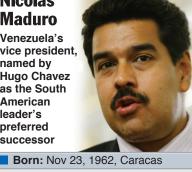
Nicolas Maduro Venezuela's

vice president, named by Hugo Chavez as the South American leader's

preferred successor



- 1970s and 80s: Begins political career as trade union activist while
- working as bus driver in Caracas 1994: Plays key role in securing
- release of Chavez from prison following 1992 failed coup attempt. Maduro's lawyer wife, Cilia Flores, leads Chavez's legal team
- 1998: Chavez wins presidential election, Maduro enters National Assembly, becomes Speaker in 2005
- 2006: Appointed Foreign Minister. Promotes Chavez's left-wing agenda, wins praise for easygoing style
- Oct 2012: Named Vice President. If Chavez resigns or dies, Maduro takes over until new presidential elections are held

Picture: Associated Press

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