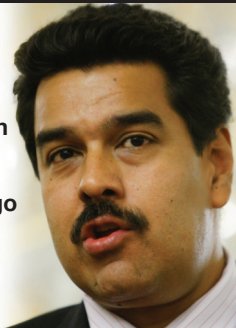


Nicolas Maduro

Labour union leader, chosen by late Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez as his preferred successor



■ **Born:** Nov 23, 1962, Caracas

■ **1970s-80s:** Begins political career as trade union activist

■ **1994:** Plays key role in securing release of Chávez from prison following 1992 failed coup attempt

■ **2000:** Elected to National Assembly. Wins plaudits for his combative defence of Chávez's left-wing Bolívar policies

■ **2005:** Elected President of National Assembly

■ **2006:** Appointed foreign minister. Builds strong ties with Chávez's allies – Russia, China, Iran and Libya

■ **2012:** Chávez names Maduro as vice president and his successor

■ **Apr 2013:** Following death of Hugo Chávez, Maduro stands as governing PSUV (United Socialist Party of Venezuela) candidate in presidential election, pledging to continue "21st century socialism"