

Michael Silverberg - The World's Tallest Slum - A "Pirate Utopia" - Is Being Cleared By The Venezuelan Government



A woman looks out of her shop window in a corridor in Torre David. Reuters/Jorge Silva

July 2014. On a rainy night in September 2007, hundreds of squatters made their way into the third-tallest skyscraper in Caracas, Venezuela, and set up a temporary encampment. The unfinished, 45-story building—intended as a bank headquarters in the center of the capital—had sat vacant for more than a decade, after the developer's death and the country's 1994 financial crisis put construction on hold.

Eventually, nearly 3,000 of the city's poor—many of them refugees from insecure shantytowns—would join the initial squatters, creating a makeshift city with apartments up to the 28th floor, even though there are no elevators or, in some places, even a facade. The squatters organized their own electricity, running water, and plumbing, along with bodegas, a barbershop, and an orthodontist. The improvised community became known as Torre David, or the Tower of David, after the developer, David Brillembourg.

Read more: <http://qz.com/the-worlds-tallest-slum-a-pirate-utopia>