



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Interactive Dialogue with the Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

#HRC58 • 18 March 2025



PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

Ms. Marta VALIÑAS, Chair of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Today's update covers some of the most significant developments in the human rights situation in Venezuela since September 2024. The **outcomes of the presidential elections** of 28 July 2024 were challenged before the electoral chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice. In October, this declared them inadmissible without an assessment of the substance or merits of the claims. The National Electoral Council, in disregard of Venezuelan electoral law, never published the totalization act or the polling station tally sheets. The FFM has received credible and corroborated testimonies, indicating that members of the National Electoral Council received political instructions to announce a result that was different from that obtained at the polling booths.

During the period covered by this update, **arbitrary detentions of opposition figures** or people who are perceived as such have continued and increased in this period immediately prior to the presidential inauguration on 10 January 2025. Pre-inauguration anti-government protests were



repressed by security forces and *colectivos*. Human rights violations were recorded, particularly arbitrary detentions. In this context, the FFM notes that since the appointment last August of Mr. Diosdado Cabello as Minister for Interior, Justice and Peace, he has formally headed up the core of the state's repressive apparatus. Mr. Cabello continues to publicly threaten any opposition figures or those perceived as such.

The FFM has continued to investigate the **deaths recorded during protests** following the presidential elections and has been analysing additional evidence regarding possible state agent responsibility in those cases. In mid-August 2024, the Attorney General stated that numerous enquiries and expert analyses had been carried out regarding the deaths during post-election protests. Nonetheless, the public information available is minimal and almost exclusively related to the deaths of a member of the Bolivarian National Guard and two other individuals, a military officer and two government party militants. Several sources remain reluctant to provide information to the FFM due to fear of reprisals, having been warned by authorities not to disclose any details.

Despite this, the FFM has reached preliminary findings in these cases which it will continue to investigate in forthcoming months. One of these cases involves the **death of seven persons** which took place on 29 July protests near the San Jacinto Obelisk area in Maracay, Aragua state. The FFM has analysed over 80 videos and more than 100 photographs of this incident, confirming that members of the army and the Bolivarian National Guard, including *CONAS*, who were responsible for providing oversight of the protest, carried firearms including shotguns, pistols and rifles in addition to riot control equipment such as tear gas grenade launchers. Two civilians were killed by gunshot. During these events, First Sergeant Torrence of the Bolivarian National Guard was also killed. The FFM has identified four generals, one colonel and one lieutenant colonel from the army and the Bolivarian National Guard involved in repressing the protest. Two of them were inside a military installation from which shots were fired at protesters.

In addition to the deaths aforementioned, the mission has initiated investigations into the deaths in state custody of four individuals. Three of these people had been detained between 29 July and 2 August and their deaths occurred in November and December. The fourth individual was detained in January 2025 and died in the February. All of these deaths were put down to health complications while in detention. The FFM has no information as to whether the competent authorities have launched any investigations as is required under international law. The mission reiterates its call for authorities to provide appropriate and **timely medical care to all detainees**.

The mission is furthermore investigating the **death of Edwin Santos**, a member of the *Voluntad Popular* opposition party whose body was found dead on 25 October. The authorities claim it was a traffic accident and they publicly announced that a criminal investigation would be launched against anyone who contradicted this official version. The family reported publicly receiving information that Mr. Santos was detained on 23 October. The FFM is checking several elements that challenge the official position in this case.

The Chilean Prosecutor's Office has made progress in its investigations into the kidnapping, **torture and murder of Lieutenant Ronald Ojeda** in Chilean territory in February 2024. According to the most recent information from the Public Prosecutor's Office, at least six members of a criminal gang called *Los Piratas*, pirates which operates in Chile, as a section of the transnational



criminal organisation *Tren de Aragua* was brought before a judge on 27 January 2025. The same source publicly reported that one of the detainees identified Mr. Diosdado Cabello as the person who ordered the action against Ojeda.

According to the FFM's data, between September and December 2024 security and intelligence forces arrested at least **42 opposition figures or people perceived to be opposition figures** - 41 men and one woman. These include political leaders and activists as well as at least 14 journalists. According to NGO sources, at least 84 perceived opposition figures were detained in the first half of January, comprising 69 men, 13 women and two teenagers. These include two social movement leaders and a person with disability. For instance, on 7 January, Mr. Carlos Correa, President of the NGO *Espacio Público*, was detained and his whereabouts remain unknown for nine days until his release. On the same day, Mr. Enrique Márquez, former presidential candidate for the *Centrados* political party and former Rector of the National Electoral Council, was also arrested. On the following day, Ángel Godoy, who is a journalist and director of the political organisation *Movimiento Democracia y Inclusión*, was also detained. The FFM is also investigating cases where family members of opposition political leaders and civil society actors continue to be arrested. For example, on 7 January, Rafael Tudares, who is the son-in-law of Edmundo González, was arrested while taking his children to school.

The FFM recalls that this March marks a one-year anniversary since six individuals sought refuge in the **residence of Argentine Ambassador** in Caracas, where they were granted asylum. One of these individuals died of an illness on 26 February 2025, after being able to finally leave the residence on 20 December 2024. To date, the Venezuelan Government has not granted the remaining five individuals the necessary **safe conduct guarantees** to leave the country, and they continue to endure constant harassment, including restriction to access to basic services. While explicitly mentioning specific cases of individuals, the FFM calls on the UNRHC to urge the Government to immediately and unconditionally release all arbitrarily detained individuals, including even those arrested before the electoral period.

In February 2025, President Maduro announced that authorities had **detained more than 150 foreign nationals**, describing them as mercenaries. The arrests mainly took place in Venezuelan border states with Colombia, as well as in Caracas between September 2024 and January 2025. These individuals are principally of Colombian and American nationality. In most of these cases, foreign detainees have not been granted access to communicate with the consular office or diplomatic mission from their home country. This is a breach of the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. The authorities have also ignored information requests from consulars and diplomatic missions regarding specific cases. Families have also been unable to contact these detained individuals, and in some cases this for several months. On 31 January, a US diplomatic envoy met with President Nicolás Maduro in Caracas, and they agreed to release six American nationals who had been detained since September 2024.

As of 3 March, according to figures published by the Minister of the Interior, 2,006 individuals detained during the post-election protests have been **released**. NGO sources have reported a much lower figure. They estimate it to be only 1,284 individuals. The official data is not disaggregated by gender, age or detention centre. Nonetheless, the FFM has obtained information that the vast majority of children and adolescents detained during the post-election protests have been released, with only three male teenagers remaining in custody. According to



the FFM's analysis of around 400 cases, most released individuals had been held in the Tocarón and Tocuyito detention centres and are now subject to alternative measures to pre-trial detention. In many cases, individuals have expressed concern concerning ignorance around exact measures imposed upon them as they have not been officially notified.

Investigations carried out by the FFM to date demonstrate that many of the **arbitrary detentions** conducted after the presidential elections were followed by prolonged periods of incommunicado detention and **short-term enforced disappearances**, short-term in particular. This pattern of behaviour by security forces has been documented in previous mission reports. The FFM is also concerned regarding allegations from recently released individuals concerning the time they spent in clandestine detention centres or so-called safe houses before being transferred to official facilities.

The FFM has continued to investigate **allegations of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment** committed against detainees subsequent to 28 July and carried out both in official detention centres and in these so-called safe houses. In one case, an investigation involving a person arbitrarily detained for assisting the opposition at polling stations on 28 July, the FFM has found reasonable grounds to believe he was tortured during the interrogations. This individual suffered beatings with wooden and metal rods on his hands and other parts of the body. The FFM is also investigating reports from detainees who claim they were transferred to so-called **punishment cells** or placed in incommunicado detention for weeks because they requested better detention conditions.

Venezuela's legal framework continues to **restrict the civic and democratic space**. In November 2024, the 'Law on Oversight, Regulation, Performance and Financing of NGOs and Social Organisations' and the organic law called 'Libertador Simón Bolívar Law' against imperialist blockade and in defence of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela entered into force. Both of these laws allow for a discretionary restriction on rights and freedoms and include severe penalties including, in the case of Simón Bolívar Law, prison sentences running up to 30 years and political disqualification of candidates for up to 60 years.

The FFM concludes that the **crime against humanity of political persecution** continues to be committed in connection with the crimes of imprisonment and severe deprivation of physical liberty. The FFM will continue investigating this and other crimes in accordance with its mandate and will present to the UNHRC its written report by September 2025 detailing progress made.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ms. Marta VALIÑAS, Chair of the FFM, explains that the report mentions specific cases, while emphasizing that there are lesser known persons whose stories and situations are even worse than the ones mentioned during the oral update. On the **reporting of cases**, she refers to difficulties expressed by the victims and their families in cooperating due to the reprisals, in a context of extortion by the State through tangible measures such as the flagship cases where persons who bring complaints of human rights violations or criticise the Government can be detained and they can be lost, in a world where the information on their fate and their location is difficult to obtain and uncertain. This is the cause of the **reluctance of people to communicate** with the FFM. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that it makes no difference whether you are



a political opponent or is simply perceived as such, whether you are an activist or a civil leader or even a person who fulfils their civic duty and works as an electoral witness in the recent elections. Any of them can be targeted by persecution and imprisonment. Turning to **civic space** and the situation of CSOs, their reality is more precarious every day. NGOs are suffering arbitrary decisions by the Government, the threat of sanctions and removal of registration. Given the abandonment of the country, many civil society leaders had to leave, and the international community could seek to protect them to save their lives and above all support them with resources to avoid civic space being converted into a desert with self-censorship and threats or scorched earth through violence against demonstrations and expression of opinions.

Mr. Francisco COX VIAL, Member of the FFM, notes the point made by the delegation of Venezuela on USAID as well as Belarus and Zimbabwe's arguments referring to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food stating that the detention conditions with limited right to food for detainees amount to torture. It is actually a very good report. With regard to **civil and political rights** following the election, the situation is very difficult. The combined effect of the 'Law on NGOs' and the 'Simón Bolívar Law' is to give space for the most arbitrary actions, as most of the so-called offences fall under the 'Simón Bolívar Law' which can qualify them as terrorism, which is lacking all impartiality. Regarding the **role of the international community**, everyone needs to play their role. The FFM determines facts, while the UNHRC supervises the human rights situation, and the ICC investigates into crimes against humanity. As regards to civil society, it can continue to provide information to the UNHRC and other bodies about the realities facing millions of Venezuelans.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Views Expressed by the Country Concerned

The **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** rejects in all its forms the political drivel presented today by an irritating mission whose existence is based on USAID and EU dollars in the stubborn and failed attempt to change the Government in Venezuela. When comparing the wording of today's report with one drawn up by the fascist Venezuelan opposition, Venezuela notes that both coincide in structure and content. In addition to being mediocre, it demonstrates that impartiality is conspicuous by its absence in the intentions of the invalid mission. Western countries are insisting on turning this council into an instrument of coercion and blackmail against the peoples of the south and they do not hold back on donating resources to do this.

A quick look at the budgets allocated to mandates imposed without the consent of states shows that the UNHRC incurred a waste of almost 50 million US dollars. Venezuela asks itself what real effect these political missions have on cooperation for human rights. They have none. So why does the UNHRC insist on spending such large sums of money on missions that objectively have no purpose in supporting human rights? The FFM produces its propaganda based on invented or politically motivated sources which are financed by the corruption underpinning USAID and without scientific rigour and with indeed malicious premeditation to satisfy a club of countries that claim to be defenders of human rights.

These are countries that when it comes to condemning without reservation Israel for the genocide in Palestine blatantly turn a blind eye. The FFM has been allocated a **budget** of \$6,083,000 which



is an expenditure of \$8,332 per day for 24 months. 85% is used for the expenses of staff who have never set foot in Venezuela and will never set foot in Venezuela. In 2024, WHO and UNICEF required a vaccination campaign for children in Gaza. They asked for \$6.83 million. 250,000 children benefited to combat measles and hepatitis B against others. Instead of wasting our time here the budget of the pseudo mission should be invested in vaccines for the children of Gaza. This would be more noble and more in line with human rights principles. If we add up the funds for travel and contracts for the mission we would get to the eye-watering figure of \$830,800. This would provide direct budgeted contributions from the OCHA in 2025 for almost 3,500 families in our sister country of Haiti, but no. Palestine and Haiti in the eyes of this hypocrisy of human rights cooked up by Western countries are irrelevant. On the other hand, according to them, Venezuela - the planet's number one oil reserve - must be put under pressure and oversight.

Venezuela strongly and indignantly denounces the kidnapping of Venezuelan migrants from the US on the basis of the anachronistic **'Alien Enemies Act of 1798'** with a view to sending them to third countries without their consent and with no due process. Last Sunday, more than 200 Venezuelans were transported from the US to El Salvador on the grounds of their nationality with no evidence that they had committed any crime in America let alone and much less in El Salvador. These citizens were arbitrarily detained subjected to cruel and degrading treatment and locked up in concentration camps in El Salvador according to the 1798 Act. 14-year-old children of Venezuelan nationality are liable to be detained and sent to third countries without due process or any guarantee for their human rights. They can be separated from their parents despite their status as children.

On what national or international legal basis are these **Venezuelan migrants in El Salvador in prisons?** Who did they check with to see if they had a criminal record? Who did they notify about their imprisonment in El Salvador? What will happen to their families and how will they communicate with them? How could two countries traffic human beings for economic reasons in the worst style of European slavery with impunity? Venezuela asks itself what has the human rights system said about this monstrosity that puts us in mind of Nazi methods against the Jewish people sent on trains to get us to the death? Does the government of El Salvador intend to be the Abu Ghraib of the Caribbean? High Commissioner for Human Rights, Special Rapporteurs and Independent Experts are always active in Venezuela. Are you going to say anything about this atrocity? The Government of Venezuela will not rest until each of its migrant citizens is returned to their homeland and to their families. Venezuela will never abandon them.

Views Expressed by State Delegations

Taking the floor on behalf of the **Nordic-Baltic countries, Estonia** remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Venezuela, particularly by intensified political repression, the excessive use of force, and the suppression of freedom of expression and media freedom. Furthermore, the Nordic-Baltic countries condemn the systematic crackdown on political opponents, including Supreme Court rulings that prevent opposition members from exercising their fundamental political rights, and the harassment of civil society, including journalists, media workers, and human rights defenders. The Nordic-Baltic countries are also worried about the absence of national accountability measures against perpetrators. It is vital that the Venezuelan authorities take decisive actions towards ending impunity for committed crimes. They call on Venezuela to comply with its international obligations and ensure full respect for



human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further urge the Government of Venezuela to collaborate effectively with the United Nations mechanisms, notably the FFM, and with the ICC.

Belgium jointly with Luxembourg and the Netherlands remain deeply concerned by the ongoing repression by the Venezuelan authorities. Legislation such as the recently adopted NGO and Simon Bolivar laws severely restricts freedom of association and limits participation of public life. Furthermore, they continue to see a worrisome pattern of repression targeting actual and purported dissenting voices through arbitrary detentions, including of Rafael Tudares and many others, or enforced disappearances and the cancellation of passports of human rights defenders, journalists, and members of the opposition. They urge the Venezuelan authorities to uphold the human rights of all Venezuelans and to unconditionally release those arbitrarily detained, including dual and foreign citizens. They also call on the authorities to guarantee prompt access to private legal and medical assistance for Rocio San Miguel.

Delivering a joint statement on behalf of Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Uruguay, and itself, **Canada** takes note of Venezuela's decision allowing the return of the OHCHR. They urge Venezuela to allow the restoration of the OHCHR's full presence and ensure it can effectively carry out all aspects of its mandate, including through unhindered access to key sites such as detention centres. They are extremely concerned by increasing cases of enforced disappearance, including of real or perceived opponents. Detaining people without legal oversight and without providing any information on their whereabouts is a violation of international human rights law. This appalling practise seeks to instil fear and ensure that dissenting voices, including human rights defenders, journalists and opposition leaders, go unheard. Calling for the immediate release of all individuals arbitrarily detained, including children and adolescents, they deplore Venezuela's continued push for restrictive legislation, further shrinking civic and democratic spaces. Some NGOs have already been forced to cease operations or relocate abroad due to persecution, harassment and the impossibility of complying with new requirements. They further express concern regarding the call for legislative and local elections without the necessary conditions for free and fair participation and urge the guarantee of such conditions to ensure these elections are conducted freely and democratically.

Taking the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the UN Charter, **Iran** reiterates the Group's categorical rejection of double standards in the field of human rights and expresses its serious concern at the continued and growing proliferation of reports on Venezuela that respond to a well-known political agenda. The Group wishes to further reaffirm its strong condemnation of the sustained and ever-increasing application of unilateral coercive measures for political purposes, which dramatically impacts the full enjoyment of human rights in Venezuela. The Group congratulates the inauguration of President Nicolas Maduro for a new term of office on January 10, 2025, in accordance with the decision of the Venezuelan people and the constitutional provisions of the country. The Group requests from the international community absolute respect for the Venezuelan institutions and expresses its confidence in the model of democracy that prevails in the country.

Portugal welcomes the return of OHCHR to Caracas as a step in the right direction, while continuing to urge Venezuela to engage constructively with the FFM, a fully-fledged OHCHR, as well as with regional mechanisms. Portugal remains concerned by the levels of repression and harassment against the opposition and civil society and their families, the imprisonment of



dissenting voices and forced disappearances, restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, as well as the targeting of journalists, media workers and human rights defenders. Portugal urges Venezuela to release all those arbitrarily detained, including dual or foreign citizens, and calls on Venezuela to disclose the whereabouts of all individuals arrested, ensuring that they are safeguarded in accordance with international law. Portugal also voices concerns at the current financial uncertainty faced by UN funds and programmes and NGOs, arguing that this could create new obstacles for civil society to operate freely in Venezuela.

Czechia urges the Venezuelan authorities to cooperate with the FFM and to extend the memorandum of understanding with the OECD. The human rights situation post-election remains alarming in Venezuela, and the erosion of the rule of law continues at a fast pace. The latest news about the planned constitutional reform just confirmed this trend. Not only international human rights commitments, but also diplomatic and consular obligations are being violated in Venezuela, as demonstrated by the enforced disappearance of the Czech citizen Jan Darmovzal, who is being held since August 2024 without due process and without any contact with Czech authorities. Czechia calls on Venezuelan authorities to immediately end his arbitrary detention. The large-scale repressions and targeted persecution of peaceful opposition and protesters regarding the presidential elections in July 2024 paint a bleak picture for the legislative and regional elections to be held in May.

Reiterating its support to the FFM and OHCHR, **Spain** urges the authorities of Venezuela to end the repression and bullying of civil society and unconditionally free all political prisoners. Spain calls for an end to arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, including those affecting foreigners and dual nationals, and an end to repression and bullying of civil society, as well as persecution of the democratic opposition. It recalls that the detention of persons who are denied access to communications or consular services in violation of the Vienna Convention of 1963 and whose fate and location are hidden by the authorities denying the protection of the law constitute enforced disappearance. All violations of human rights that are reported must be investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. Spain also calls on the authorities to cooperate fully with the FFM and OHCHR.

Taking note of the report on the human rights situation in Venezuela, **Saudi Arabia** thanks the Government of Venezuela for its efforts and its cooperation with OHCHR. Saudi Arabia emphasises the importance of a dialogue that is far from confrontational, activity drawn on best human rights practises and taking into account all of the challenges that states face. Saudi Arabia commends Venezuela's determination to implement the UPR recommendations and call for more support to Venezuela by the international community to protect human rights. In conclusion, Saudi Arabia renews its position, namely, that strengthening human rights requires dialogue with concerned countries to help them to build capacities, and calls for objectivity and universality to be respected in human rights matters.

Switzerland thanks the mission for the update on the human rights situation in Venezuela, with a focus on increased repression against political opponents, human rights defenders and civil society since the presidential elections of July 2024 and with the approach of the legislative elections and governor elections of May 2025. Particularly concerned by arbitrary detention of many persons, including four minors, Switzerland calls for their immediate release. It welcomes the release of hundreds of prisoners since December 2024 and encourages the authorities to



continue that trend. Switzerland shares the FFM's concern over the systematic violation of the right to a fair trial in human detention conditions, including restrictions on the right to visit and enforced disappearances. Switzerland urges the Government to end the repression, guarantee a transparent, free, fair electoral process and call on all political parties to seek dialogue for a peaceful solution to the political conflict. While welcoming the return of OHCHR to the country, Switzerland reiterates its call on the authorities to cooperate with the international human rights protection mechanisms.

Consistently supporting the activities of the FFM, **Japan** voted in favour of the resolution the human rights situation in Venezuela adopted during the previous UNHRC's session which included the extension of the FFM's mandate. Japan remains concerned about the human rights situation in Venezuela. In this regard, Japan welcomes the resumption of OHCHR's activities in Venezuela and, at the same time, expects to see the return of further OHCHR personnel and the conclusion of the new memorandum of understanding between OHCHR and the Venezuelan Government. Japan has repeatedly expressed its concern over arbitrary detention by the Venezuelan authorities. In this respect, Japan welcomes the decision of the Venezuelan authorities to release some of the detainees, but continues to call for the release of all other arbitrarily detained individuals, including foreign nationals. Japan is also concerned about the consequences of the act on the control, regularisation operations, and financing of non-governmental and related organisations, and calls for the Venezuelan government to preserve space for civic society. Japan continues to urge the Venezuelan authorities to address the human rights situation in the country in a manner that reflects the will of the Venezuelan people.

The **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)** remains deeply concerned at the continued political debated pressure and biased approach against Venezuela under the pretext of human rights. The FFM on Venezuela is a clear example of the politicised use of the UNHRC, in violation of the universal principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of states enshrined in the UN Charter. The DPRK commends the Government of Venezuela for its sincere efforts and progress achieved in the human rights system and for showing the speed of transparent and constructive cooperation with the UN human rights mechanism. The DPRK firmly rejects any attempt to defame and slander the last presidential election in Venezuela, interfere in internal affairs, and impose US aims against Venezuela with the intent to continue pursuing the failed strategy of regime change. The DPRK strongly denounces the US illegal application of acts against Venezuelan nationals residing in that country, and their transfer to third countries without due process and under cruel and degrading treatment.

Mexico welcomes the report. It reflects the complex human rights situation of Venezuela. Mexico notes the need to pursue efforts to ensure the protection of fundamental freedoms and respect of the rule of law. There are major challenges in areas such as access to justice, freedom of expression, and protection of civil and political rights. One of the most pressing aspects is the need to strengthen national institutions to ensure due process and judicial independence. These are key for public confidence and the exercise of fundamental rights by all persons. Mexico emphasises the need to protect civic space and encourage dialogue among all sectors of society to build inclusive, sustainable solutions. In this context, international cooperation and strengthening of monitoring mechanisms can play a key role in promoting measures that contribute to stability and respect for human rights. The international community must continue



to support initiatives that promote justice and reconciliation and guarantee the rights of Venezuelans.

Iran believes that country-specific mandates violate the principles of impartiality and genuine dialogue. Resolution 57/36, which mandates the fact-finding mission of Venezuela, is a clear example of the politicised use of the UNHRC. Iran reiterates the urgent need to act according to the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter, without resorting to coercion, selectivity, politicisation, or double standards implied by the imposition of hostile mandates against specific countries. Iran appreciates the Gand people of Venezuela for overcoming the post-election crisis on July 28, 2024, which was carried out with the financial support of some countries and destabilised the country. Iran firmly rejects the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against Venezuela that affect the human rights of its people. It also strongly rejects the US application of the so-called 'Allied Enemies Act of 1798' against Venezuelan nationals residing in the US and their transfer to third countries without due process, and calls for the UN human rights system to take action regarding these offences.

Chile voices concern at the systematic coordinated repression, including enforced disappearances of short duration, and rejects the many restrictions affecting detained persons, including violation of their right to food and health and basic due process, most notably children, which exacerbates the severity of these human rights violations. In particular, Chile expresses concern at the situation of its own nationals, María Natalia Améstica Moraga and Guillermo Orlando Améstica Moraga. They are detained at the headquarters of the National Anti-Extortion and Anti-Kidnapping Brigade in conditions of extreme isolation, victims of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, including a lack of access to natural light, ongoing searches, restricted admission of food and medicines, and deprivation of sleep. Chile urges the authorities to free them.

Burkina Faso notes the report by the FFM and recalls that promotion of basic rights and freedoms in a country is primarily the responsibility of the state. Any external initiative to strengthen such promotion must be carried out with strict compliance with the country's sovereignty. Burkina Faso believes that the work of the UNHRC must be focused on the promotion of frank, constructive dialogue rather than persisting in establishing selective, non-consensual mandates. Burkina Faso is convinced that the efforts by Venezuela to strengthen its cooperation with the human rights mechanisms show the country's readiness to respect its international commitments for the promotion and protection of human rights. In particular, Burkina Faso welcomes the measures taken by Venezuela's Government to strengthen the protection of the rights of women and children and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in national policies and programmes. In conclusion, it encourages Venezuela's authorities to step up efforts in order further to guarantee the enjoyment of human rights in the country.

Albania supports the mandate of the FFM and thanks it for its update which shows severe human rights violations in Venezuela. Albania is concerned by the ongoing information regarding the worsening human rights violations and ongoing restrictions on civic space in the country, in particular summary executions, enforced disappearances, acts of torture, reprisals and public defamation against leaders of the opposition and peaceful demonstrators, journalists, lawyers and human rights defenders. It condemns these human rights violations and calls on Venezuela immediately to stop all acts of intimidation and reprisal. Noting the announcement of the release



of over a thousand persons following detention after the presidential elections, Albania regrets the lack of a judiciary able to investigate severe human rights violations and call for the release of all persons arbitrarily detained, including political prisoners. In conclusion, Albania continues to support the people of Venezuela and looks for it to regain freedom in the country.

Uruguay notes the return of OHCHR to the country and its renewed cooperation and calls on Venezuela fully and unconditionally to comply with renewal of its work. Uruguay reiterates its concern at the deteriorating human rights situation and the situation of fundamental freedoms in Venezuela. Uruguay also expresses concern at the statement by the independent experts dated 5 February this year relating to an increased use of enforced disappearance as a weapon to silence members of the opposition, persons perceived as such, democratic activists and human rights defenders, which was aimed at seeking a dissuasive effect on society as a whole and fuelled by generalised impunity and selective justice. Uruguay reiterates its condemnation of all detentions of minors following the protests of 29 and 30 July 2024. They are accused of serious crimes such as terrorism as well as a lack of separation by age or gender in detention centres, which places them in a situation of particular vulnerability.

Eritrea argues that this FFM is another example of the selective and biased counter-specific mandate that violates the principles of sovereignty, non-interference and respect for territorial integrity enshrined in the UN Charter. It is undeniable that Venezuela has made significant progress in strengthening its institutions, promoting social justice and upholding human rights despite facing an unjust campaign of economic warfare. The same states that push these mandates are the ones imposing illegal and unilateral coercive measures, deliberately crippling Venezuelan economy to advance the regime change agenda. Venezuela has demonstrated full commitment to human rights by cooperating with OHCHR, fulfilling its obligations under various treaty points and EPR mechanisms. The Government has also ensured the transparent conduct of presidential elections in July 2024. Attempts to destabilise the country post the elections fuelled by foreign interference must be condemned. Furthermore, Eritrea expresses deep concern at the recent handling of Venezuelan migrants. The treatment of affected individuals must fully adhere to the due process international human rights standards. To conclude, Eritrea stands in solidarity with Venezuela and reaffirms its commitment to defending the principles of sovereignty, self-determination and fairness within the human rights system, and calls for the termination of this FFM.

Brazil is grateful to the FFM and urges Venezuela's authorities to act with impartiality vis-à-vis the alleged human rights violations and to cooperate with OHCHR and UNHRC mechanisms in this regard. Brazil recognises the gestures undertaken by the Government of Maduro, freeing detainees and in recent months reopening the OHCHR's Office in Caracas. Nonetheless, Brazil deplores the recent tensions and threats against political opponents and calls for respect for political agents and actors. The elections of 28 July have been a lost opportunity to normalise the situation in Venezuela. Brazil believes that it is essential that dialogue and shared understanding are sought by all parties. Brazil sees with concern the unilateral coercive measures which have been imposed on Venezuela which have a significant impact on human rights.

Colombia is grateful for the work carried out by the FFM and OHCHR. Colombia urges Venezuela's authorities to step up their cooperation and technical assistance with OHCHR as well as exchange of information. In Colombia's view, it is important to protect the civic space and



ensure the necessary conditions to work for the organisations and civil society. For this reason, Colombia calls for respect and support for OHCHR. The Venezuelan authorities should implement the recommendations contained in the last report from OHCHR, guaranteeing a civic space which is safe and inclusive. Colombia sees with concern the communications sent out by the experts on 12 February relating to complaints around enforced disappearances, particularly short-term ones. It urges Venezuela to guarantee the full respect due to due process and to ensure the safety of those deprived of their freedom. Colombia reiterates its request for information regarding the fate and whereabouts of Colombian citizens presumed to be detained in Venezuela with a view to providing them consular assistance. Finally, Colombia calls for the end of UCMs against Venezuela. These have a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable sectors of the population, as noted by the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food. Colombia repudiates the kidnapping of Venezuelans deported from the United States and the detention of these in El Salvador.

The **Russian Federation** is attentively following the human rights situation in Venezuela. The 2024 presidential elections took place without serious complaints and showed the country's commitment to its international human rights obligations. New elections are coming up including representatives to the National Assembly. It is encouraging that the authorities in Venezuela are creating the necessary conditions for participation by all citizens. Russia notes the main threat to human rights in Venezuela continues to be the economic pressure from outside in the form of unilateral coercive measures. The sanctions seek to stir up public discontent and domestic tensions. There have been over a thousand restrictive measures imposed creating a de facto economic and financial blockade. Russia calls on the international human rights community to pay close attention to this issue.

China welcomes the efforts and accomplishments made by the Venezuelan government in protecting human rights. China also respects the sovereign choice as to the path towards development taken by the Venezuelan people. China has always supported constructive dialogue and resolution as opposed to exterior and external interference in the internal affairs of Venezuela. The deployment of specific mechanisms in country without the forthright consent of that country will only exacerbate confrontation. Some countries have deployed UCMs against Venezuela. This seriously exacerbates its efforts towards socioeconomic development and efforts to improve the life of the population. They also threaten the subsistence and the right to development and other fundamental rights of the Venezuelan people. The FFM has chosen to completely omit in its report the impact of these UCMs on the socioeconomic development of the country as well as humanitarian aid. It has nonetheless chosen to use unverified information. This does not necessarily reflect objectivity. China urges on all countries to immediately lift UCMs.

Cuba rejects this hostile and interventionist exercise against Venezuela, a system which has been systematically undermined. This mechanism which has been imposed upon Venezuela without its consent serves a political agenda which uses human rights as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of Venezuelans. The defence of Venezuela is not an issue exclusive to Venezuelans. It should be a ban which calls all to uphold the UN Charter and the cause of human rights. The UNHRC cannot be an instrument of coercion and blackmail against the countries of the south. This constitutes irreparable damage against the defence of human rights. This body



must demand the immediate cessation of unilateral coercive measures against Venezuelan people in the intent to subdue by the cruellest means. Cuba rejects the unprecedented invocation by the US Government of the 'Alien Enemies Act of 1798'. This has been done under false pretexts in order to escalate its policy of hostility against Venezuela. It is important to emphasise that calls to disregard the election results in Venezuela are irresponsible and disrespectful to the people's will. Venezuelans have the right to defend their revolution and it is up to them to shape their future and no one else.

Romania thanks the FFM for the presentation of the human rights situation in Venezuela and reaffirms its strong support for the mandate. Romania adds its voice to the course of Venezuelan authorities to cooperate fully with all UN human rights mechanisms and to allow the restoration of the full OECD presence in the country. The findings that have been just presented are deeply worrying. Serious human rights violations continue to occur without any perpetrator to be held to account. Repression, intimidation, targeted persecution and other human rights violations against political opponents, human rights defenders, journalists and civil society organisations should come to an end. Venezuelan authorities should uphold and comply with its commitments under international law. Romania calls on Venezuela to release all those arbitrarily detained before and after the presidential election, provide them guarantees of a fair trial, allow thorough investigations and take measures to ensure justice and reparations for all victims.

Poland thanks the FFM for the oral update and remains committed to supporting the activities of the mission aimed at investigating gross violations of human rights in Venezuela. Poland urges the authorities of Venezuela to respect, protect and fulfil the right of citizens to take part in the conduct of public affairs and the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as to take immediate measures to halt, remedy and prevent human rights violations. Poland stands by all those upholding democratic values in Venezuela, including human rights defenders. Poland remains deeply concerned by continued repressions by the authorities of Venezuela, targeting opposition leaders, civil society representatives and their families, including imprisoning and forcing its own citizens to live in fear or go into exile.

Paraguay is grateful to the FFM for its update and appreciates the efforts made by its members throughout their mandate. Paraguay hopes that the experts from OHCHR will be afforded the necessary openness and collaboration. The most recent events in Venezuela demonstrate a concerning escalation in repression and of human rights violations, begun in the electoral context and escalated from January. Since the end of December last year, many opposition leaders have been detained with no access to their lawyers or family members. In addition to the arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances, activists, political leaders and citizens warrant respect. In this context, Paraguay rejects stalwartly the criminalisation of peaceful protests, as well as the deployment of security forces to repress demonstrations and the use of the justice system as a weapon to silence dissidents. This system, using persecutions and repressive tactics, is clearly reflected in the attacks on family members of opposition members, as well as the obstruction of asylum seekers in embassies who are constantly deprived of basic services and needs. Paraguay reiterates its call to the Venezuelan authorities to end these practises, which violate human rights and comply with their obligations in the context of international law and international human rights.



The **United Kingdom (UK)** thanks the FFM for its update, which remains critical to improving human rights in Venezuela and ensuring accountability. The human rights situation in Venezuela remains grave. Over seven months have passed since the presidential election and the Venezuelan authorities have still not produced any credible evidence of votes cast. The subsequent oppression against political figures, journalists, trade unionists and civil society continues. This has contributed to a culture of fear, as fundamental freedoms continue to be eroded. The continued reports of enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions and deaths in detention are alarming and unacceptable. Despite some conditional releases, over 1,000 Venezuelans and foreign nationals remain arbitrarily detained. The UK calls for their immediate and unconditional release, and continues to support a Venezuelan-led democratic and peaceful transition that will respect each and every vote cast on 28 July. Venezuela needs a strong civil society and tolerance for democratic opposition to support democratic normalisation.

The **Lao PDR** thanks the FFM for its report and commends Venezuela for its continued efforts and progress made in promoting and protecting human rights of its citizens, despite various difficulties and challenges faced by the country. It strongly supports the right to self-determination of Venezuelan people without external interference. The Lao PDR opposes any politically motivated country-specific resolution without the consent of the concerned state, as they are ineffective, counterproductive, and against the principle of respect for sovereignty and non-interference enshrined in the UN Charter. The Lao PDR therefore reiterates its firm position that human rights issues shall be addressed through genuine dialogue and cooperation, in capacity-building and technical assistance upon request and according to national needs and priorities of states, and be guided by the principle of impartiality, objectivity, non-selectivity, and non-politicisation.

According to **Belarus**, the FFM continues to show biased approaches, showing that it is an instrument for political pressure on a sovereign state, not for human rights cooperation. The efforts to denigrate the authorities are based on the assessment of the presidential elections. This is a brazen interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state to destabilise the country. The Government of Venezuela cooperates with OHCHR and is committed to its international obligations under human rights treaties. The catastrophic impact of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) is shown by the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food following a recent visit. Belarus calls on OHCHR and human rights mechanisms to stand up for the human rights of Venezuelans and unequivocally condemn the UCMs and call for an end to them. Efforts for human rights must be shown in establishing dialogue with the Government and not worsening confrontation and limiting the economic potential of the state.

Georgia thanks the FFM for its oral update. As already reported by the FFM, the continued pattern of threats, arrests and prosecutions, intimidation of the population create a climate of fear and reprisals. At this point, there are over 1,000 political prisoners in Venezuela, including 121 women, while the whereabouts of 62 prisoners remain to be unknown. It is also alarming that the number of cases of gross human rights infringements have increased since the election as a result of the intensification of targeted repressions. Georgia is also concerned that the arbitrary detentions have led to the recent deaths of political prisoners, such as Jesus Álvarez, Oswald Alexander González Pérez, Cesar Mayora and Reynaldo Araujo. Georgia continues to stand with the brave Venezuelan people as they spare no effort to revive democracy, rule of law and



institutions. Georgia calls on the regime to end repression and provide solutions for Venezuela's recovery.

New Zealand remains deeply concerned by the ongoing dire human rights situation in Venezuela, which has further deteriorated over the last year, including in the context of the presidential election and inauguration. New Zealand continues to call for a peaceful and democratic solution to the human rights crisis in Venezuela. It urges the Venezuelan authorities to cease their ongoing political repression and arrest of human rights defenders, political leaders, and their families. New Zealand continues to strongly support the mandate of the FFM, which regressively remains necessary given the further deteriorating human rights situation. It calls for the full renewal of the mandate of the FFM, in addition to the renewal of the monitoring and reporting mandates of OHCHR.

Argentina is grateful for the update from the FFM on Venezuela, which gives account of the serious and systematic violations of human rights in this country. For the opposition, the situation is very serious. Since the election of 28 July last year, there has been an increase in violations. This began with the submission of five Venezuelan citizens to detention in the Argentinian embassy in Caracas, thus depriving them of basic needs, notably light, water, and medicine. Argentina also notes with concern the arbitrary detention of Nahuel Gallo, who has been denied fundamental legal guarantees and diplomatic protection, as well as the more serious attacks against refugees and other citizens. The illegal and arbitrary detention of the Argentinian citizen Nahuel Gallo; the denial to him of guarantees of due process, defence of justice, and consular assistance; and unacceptable living conditions, constitute violations of human rights. Argentina requests the High Commissioner to issue a clear statement condemning this, and to urge Mr. Maduro to immediately free Mr. Nahuel Gallo and all of those who have sought asylum in the Argentinian embassy. Argentina firmly and energetically urges reason and justice to prevail.

Bolivia cannot accept that UNHRC mechanisms be instrumentalised to strengthen negative campaigns seeking to isolate, put pressure on, and asphyxiate some states. Bolivia considers that the imposition of mandates without the support of concerned countries does not contribute to establishing a constructive dialogue or promote international cooperation. In addition, these mandates, if they are not working with the state, are not present on the ground alongside people, and they receive information from different stakeholders, not allowing great objectivity or affecting the diverse points of view. As a result, the imposition of these mechanisms promotes division and confrontation and increases polarisation, as in many other cases. Bolivia reiterates its support and solidarity to the Venezuelan Government and people that continue to resist the imposition of UCMs, which have negative effects and impacts on human rights and Venezuelan people. Bolivia welcomes their participation in the UPR, which demonstrates their commitment to the human rights mechanisms, as well as the renewal of their cooperation with OHCHR. Bolivia once again calls for the UNHRC to promote genuine, constructive, and cooperative dialogue with states, leaving behind its selectiveness, politicisation, and double standards.

South Sudan has taken note of the oral update of the FFM. It commends Venezuela for being a party to many human rights treaties, as well as for its active cooperation with OHCHR. It notes with concern the negative impact of UCMs imposed against Venezuela on the enjoyment of human rights and on the ability of the Government to implement social protection programmes and deliver basic public services to its people. South Sudan calls on the UNHRC to pursue



genuine dialogue as the appropriate way to promote and protect human rights worldwide, and to strictly adhere to objective principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in the internal affairs of states, as enshrined in the UN Charter. Furthermore, establishment of country-specific mandates should be a subject for prior consent of countries concerned, in order to ensure the needed cooperation.

Burundi remains convinced that an improvement in the human rights situation is dear to all nations and must, as a result, be grounded on constructive cooperation and inclusive dialogue between states. In this light, specific country mandates, with no consent from concerned states, violate the universal principles enshrined in the UN Charter, and unfortunately lead to the politicisation of the works of the UNHRC. States' sovereignty and integrity must be put first and foremost, given that the responsibility of states vis-à-vis the promotion and protection of human rights must constantly be taken into account. In this regard, Burundi recognises Venezuela's commitment to the UPR mechanism, but also to treaty bodies, to eliminate racial discrimination and all forms of discrimination against women. To conclude, Burundi encourages all to work for solidarity and international cooperation and that this respect be given as a priority to initiatives by states in the sphere of human rights.

Zimbabwe commends Venezuela for its commitment towards fulfilling its international human rights obligations and continued cooperation with OHCHR and Special Procedures, as evidenced by the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food. It is regrettable that these positive efforts, including access to and supply of utilities, realisation of the right to food and provision of affordable and quality health services, continue to be severely affected by UCMs. Zimbabwe condemns the imposition of UCMs and reiterates its call for their lifting on Venezuela and other targeted countries, such as Zimbabwe, as a critical step towards improvement of the lives and well-being of citizens. Zimbabwe is concerned by the establishment and continuation of the FFM without the consent of the Government of Venezuela. The move is counterproductive in terms of encouraging and supporting the country to meet more effectively its human rights obligations. It urges the UNHRC to engage with Venezuela through genuine dialogue and cooperation that uphold the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs.

Sudan welcomes the progress achieved by Venezuela in the field of the promotion of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, as well as issues related to civil and political rights. In this light, Sudan welcomes Venezuela's success in organising general elections, as well as the dialogue and reconciliation and conference building measures. It further welcomes cooperation activities with UN agencies and UNICEF as part of a response to various challenges. Sudan underscores the need not to impose mechanisms without the consent of concerned countries. It encourages Venezuela to continue protecting human rights, particularly with regards to improving the situation of women, migrants and providing the right to food. Sudan stresses the need to provide Venezuela with everything it needs to protect human rights.

Sri Lanka appreciates Venezuela's continued and active engagement with OHCHR and its regular human rights mechanisms, including facilitating visits by Special Procedures. Venezuela has cooperated with the treaty body reviews, most recently with the Human Rights Committee, CMW, CEDAW and CERD. Venezuela's third UPR review was successfully concluded in 2022. The UNHRC resolution which mandates the FFM has been adopted by a divided vote without the consent of the country concerned. Sri Lanka believes that such initiatives are unproductive and



do not contribute to any substantive outcome for the promotion and protection of human rights in any country. Cooperation with OHCHR should always be governed by respect for the sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of the country concerned. Sri Lanka is also firmly of the view that the UNRHC should place equal emphasis on all human rights without discrimination. It therefore encourages the UNHRC to engage constructively with the Government of Venezuela in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation to safeguard the human rights of the Venezuelan people, including their right to development.

Peru once again expresses its grave concern at the increase in registered cases of arbitrary detention, the absence of guarantees of due process, undue restrictions on civic and democratic space and stigmatisation and criminalisation of civil society representatives, journalists and dissidents. Peru rejects arbitrary detention of three Peruvian citizens by the authorities of Venezuela at the end of 2024. Their location is still unknown. Peru urges the authorities of Venezuela to respect the human rights of these citizens and provide information about them. Committed to the Inter-American Democratic Charter adopted in Lima in 2001, Peru strongly supports a return to democracy in Venezuela and the immediate start of a peaceful transition that respects the will of the Venezuelan people expressed in the elections of 28 July 2024. Peru, with other partner states in the region, will continue committed to the efforts towards a genuinely Venezuelan solution that brings peace, well-being, democracy, the rule of law, justice and the full development of the people of Venezuela.

Yemen stresses its commitment to the UN Charter, particularly the respect of sovereignty and political independence of countries and non-interference in their domestic affairs. In this light, Yemen stresses the role of the UNHRC as a forum for dialogue and cooperation on the basis of mutual respect, away from politicisation and selectivity which might affect its credibility. It expresses its concerns with regards to the humanitarian impacts of UCMs on Venezuela affecting basic rights of people, particularly the right to food, development and health. Yemen underscores the need to deal with these issues through diplomatic means and through dialogue in a way that responds to the needs of the people and reinforce permanent settlements.

Ukraine appreciates the oral update from the FFM which highlights ongoing human rights violations in Venezuela reflecting a systematic effort to silence dissent and undermine democratic principles. The fraudulent nature of the 2024 presidential elections in Venezuela has deprived the people of their democratic rights to determine their own future. The authorities' refusal to recognise the will of the people and subsequent violent crackdowns provide clear evidence of their disregard for fundamental freedom and human dignity. The suppression of peaceful protests, the persecution of opposition leaders and the silencing of civil society must be condemned. Ukraine regrets Venezuela's unwillingness to denounce Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, a stance that reflects its own political alignments. Nevertheless, Ukraine stands in unwavering solidarity with the Venezuelan people in their struggle for democracy, justice and fundamental rights. Ukraine calls on the international community to intensify pressure on the Venezuelan authorities to end political persecutions, release all arbitrarily detained individuals and ensure accountability for crimes against humanity.

Ethiopia believes that multilateral forums, including the UNHRC, play a vital role in fostering collaboration among States to fulfil their human rights obligations. To this end, it strongly advocates for constructive engagement, cooperation and mutual understanding in the promotion



of human rights globally. Ethiopia remains committed to the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity. In this context, Ethiopia expresses concern over the selectivity and politicisation of human rights as well as the use of double standards recognising that such approaches hinder meaningful progress in the protection and promotion of human rights. In light of this, Ethiopia advocates concert-based capacity building and technical assistance to augment national efforts. It commends Venezuela for its continued engagement in the UPR process. Ethiopia encourages Venezuela to implement accepted recommendations. In conclusion, it emphasises that all countries, including Venezuela, have the sovereign right to determine their own path towards development and addressing human rights concerns. In this light, prioritising dialogue and cooperation with Venezuela is essential to uphold the protection and promotion of human rights.

Taking note of the update by the FFM, **Türkiye** believes that full re-establishment of the presence of the OSCE in Venezuela will enhance collaboration in the field of human rights. Türkiye maintains its constructive engagement with all relevant actors both in Venezuela and within the UN system. It values the cooperation that Venezuela has been developing with the OSCE based on dialogue and mutual respect. Türkiye rejects all UCMs that have a direct negative impact on the daily life of each and every Venezuelan, being a cause of concern to all of them as well as to the companies and citizens of other states. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food on his visit to Venezuela also substantiates how UCMs hinder the realisation of the right to food in Venezuela from production and commercialisation to distribution. Türkiye strongly supports the Special Rapporteur's call for the immediate lifting of the sectorial sanctions. Turkey believes that problems of Venezuela, including those in the field of human rights, can only be solved through dialogue and cooperation among the Venezuelans themselves. Türkiye stands by Venezuela and will continue to work constructively with all relevant actors for its stability and prosperity.

Taking note of the update by the FFM, **Egypt** stresses its principled and steadfast position against the position of mechanisms on countries to oversee the situation of human rights in them without their consent. It stresses the need to adhere to the principles of objectivity, universality and non-selectivity, while refraining from double standards when dealing with human rights globally.

Views Expressed by intergovernmental Organizations

The **European Union (EU)** supports all human rights mechanisms in Venezuela and urges the authorities to engage with them constructively, notably the FFM and OHCHR, ensuring complete and unfettered access to the country. The EU condemns all acts of repression, including excessive use of force and harassment against dissenting voices, opposition members, human rights defenders, and journalists, as well as the severe restriction of civil society space. The EU urges authorities to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights, to investigate all violations and abuses, and hold those responsible accountable. While noting recent releases, the EU remains deeply concerned by the staggering number of arbitrary arrests by the authorities since 28 July, including minors. The EU calls on Venezuela to free immediately and unconditionally all political prisoners and to end arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearance, including of dual and foreign citizens, thereby recalling Venezuela's obligations under the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations. The EU will continue to work with all Venezuelans regional



and international partners in support of Venezuela-led dialogue towards a peaceful and democratic solution that reflects the will of the Venezuelan people.

Following the Venezuelan presidential elections on 28 July 2024, the **Inter-American Human Rights Commission** documented serious human rights violations, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions, excessive use of force in protest, judicial persecution and violations of due process. In its January 2025 report, the Inter-American Commission concludes that there is consistent repression following the electoral period and it continues. It urges Venezuela to end political persecution, to free political prisons and re-establish constitutional order. The report also documents acts of intimidation and censorship against the press, including hard copy and digital online attacks and confiscation of passports and threats of criminalisation. The report drafted by the Commission, independently from the FFM, reaches similar conclusions, and this, far from being the subject of coordination, is a verification of the same events by human rights specialists through distinct channels. The Inter-American Commission calls on the international community to activate diplomatic and institutional channels to achieve the liberation of those arbitrarily detained for political reasons, prioritising human rights in their dialogue on Venezuela.

Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

Aula Abierta states that Venezuela continues repressive state policies including enforced disappearance of a short term against opponents and persons seen as such, including members of the academic community and human rights defenders. These disappearances increased following the elections of 28 July and are qualified by the Inter-American Commission as practises of state terrorism. They sow fear and seek to control the population. Human rights organisations are threatened by the law and control, regularisation, performance and financing of NGOs designed to persecute and render them unlawful. Defenders such as professors Rocio San Miguel and Javier Tarazona or Kennedy Tejada are detained and criminal charges are brought without respect for due process. There is an augmented and complex emergency with forced migration of over 7.7 million Venezuelans many of them being forcibly returned from host countries violating the principle of non-return. After the elections of 28 July the Government seeks to normalise the situation calling on the right to peace in the context of human rights violations and submitting the population to authoritarianism calling for the next elections without minimal guarantees of transparency or separation of powers.

Ingénieurs du Monde explains that Venezuela is experiencing one of the world's most severe human rights crises stated by the FFM and confirmed daily by thousands of victims of torture enforced disappearance and political persecution. After Maduro's defeat in 28 July elections the Venezuelan State has unleashed an unprecedented and brutal escalation of repression. Over 2,000 people have been arbitrarily detained including children, women and activists for demanding their right to vote. Members of their campaign have spent a year trapped in the Argentine embassy without electricity, water or essential supplies with safe passage denied. Political leaders and their families have been arbitrarily detained or disappeared such as human rights defenders who remain in prison under inhumane conditions and in law as President-elect Edmundo González has also been held hostage and is missing since January 7. Venezuela is a country held hostage by a criminal system. The regime is left with nothing but repression and terror a sign of its own weakness. The world cannot ignore this horror. The UNHRC and the FFM



must intensify their efforts and remain steadfast. It is time for international justice to move forward.

The **International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)** welcomes the critical work of the FFM and condemns the recent steps taken by Venezuela's authorities to implement the law on control, regularisation action and financing of NGOs and non-profit social organisations. The measures taken are but the latest in a series of attacks against independent civil society organisations. CSOs undertaking human rights work are subject to arbitrary and abusive obligations that significantly hinder their work and may result in cancellation of their registration. The ICJ welcomes the release of some persons who had been arbitrarily detained, many after the presidential elections of July 2024. However, ICJ's research shows that most of these persons continue to be subjected to intrusive precautionary control measures and judicial proceedings without respect for due process rights. The ICJ calls on the UNHRC to continue and strengthen its work towards accountability for serious human rights violations in Venezuela, including by ensuring effective cooperation between OHCHR, the FFM and UN Special Procedures. The ICJ also calls on the Venezuelan authorities to cooperate with UNHRC mechanisms.

The **World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)** through the Observatory Protection of Human Rights Defenders has recorded since January 2022 and until October 2024 more than 1,700 attacks against organisations and defenders, of which more than 80% are attributed to the State. In the last year alone, OMCT has issued more than 20 urgent calls on these situations, denouncing acts of intimidation, threats, harassment, passport violation, arbitrary detentions and torture. OMCT has also alerted about the approval of legal frameworks that threaten the work of human rights defence. OMCT recognises the fundamental work of the FFM to document this situation and insists that the international community must continue to denounce these facts and express its concern. OMCT supports the search for solutions based on international standards of human rights to put an end to this policy of persecution, intimidation and harassment.

United Nations Watch takes the floor through the voice of Edmundo González Urrutia who addresses the UNHRC on behalf of millions of Venezuelans who have resisted repression with dignity, expressed their democratic will, and have been persecuted for it. The Venezuelan State seeks to present an image of cooperation but reality gives the lie to their words. In Venezuela, prisons are full of political prisoners. Repression is the only response to those who demand their basic rights. For Venezuelans, it is crucial that OHCHR maintains its presence in the country; that the FFM continues its work of documentation and reporting; and that the UNHRC reaffirms its commitment to defence of the basic human rights of Venezuelans. Venezuelans are not asking for pity. They demand justice. They demand freedom and seek the support of the international community to achieve that.

International Service for Human Rights states that year's presidential election in Venezuela was stolen. Elections this year could further consolidate the power of the government a government deepening repression. Enforced disappearance, an abhorrent crime carried out by state agents to spread fear and silent dissent is one of the many repressive tactics employed. The recent NGO Law and Simón Bolívar Law restrict freedom of association and the right to defend rights. Defenders continue to be arbitrarily detained including Javier Tarazona, Racio San Miguel and Julio Rojas. Many others have been forced into exile and many face reprisals for engaging with



the UNHRC. Last July the Attorney General publicly threatened those attending the UNHRC session with arrest. Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis deepens with over 20 million people needing assistance. Ongoing repression continues to contribute to this crisis, hindering efforts to address it. Venezuelan defenders both inside and outside the country are under huge pressure. They provide clear vision and roadmaps for transition based on their respective rights. Their work must be supported urgently, both politically and financially.

The [International Bar Association](#) jointly with the Law Society of England and Wales and Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada congratulate the FFM on its excellent work. Repression of dissidents continues in alarming fashion in Venezuela reducing and closing civic space. The justice system has become a button for repression. Human rights offenders, opposition figures, lawyers criminalised for exercising their profession. On 5 March 2025 at least 1,060 people were still arbitrarily detained for political reasons including the lawyers Rocio San Miguel in jail since 9 February 2024 and Kennedy Tejeda since 2 August 2024. Like most political prisoners, both have been reported to be victims of enforced disappearance torture, cruel treatment and denial of legal defence. They are all the more concerned by the 'anti-NGO law' which steps up monitoring and government control on NGOs. They call for the immediate and conditional release of the two lawyers and all victims of arbitrary detention in Venezuelan and calls on the UNHRC to continue responding firmly to the worsening crisis in the country.

The [International Federation for Human Rights Leagues](#) welcomes the recent report by the FFM and shares its recommendations. It calls on the authorities of Venezuela immediately to free all political prisoners. It strongly condemns the ongoing detention of political prisoners in Venezuela. This has not ended. Following the elections of July 2024 there have been over 1,600 persons detained arbitrarily for exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful demonstration. Hundreds of political prisoners were freed thanks to national and international pressure but to date over 1,000 persons remain detained. Many of them have been held for years without trial. Of those 165 are military staff, 121 women and 4 minors. This is an ongoing attack on political dissidents, opposition leaders and activists by the Government of Venezuela which has been happening for over a decade. The Federation calls on the international community to continue to speak out so the Government of Venezuela releases all political prisoners in the country. At least 66 of them have a second nationality. It asks the UNHRC to continue its efforts to end the repression of Venezuela and ensure that all serious human rights violations and crimes against humanity are not left unpunished.

As the situation in Venezuela deteriorates, [Amnesty International](#) emphasizes that the importance of international scrutiny and protection mechanisms cannot be understated. At least 5 children remain arbitrarily detained and 220 are being subjected to unfair trials and unfounded charges of terrorism and other discretionary crimes. These children are suffering today as we speak the consequences of detention, criminalisation and often torture. Amnesty International demands unconditional release and immediate redress for all of them. As authorities deepen the crackdown on civil society through abusive legislation and the criminalisation of human rights defenders, Amnesty International demands the immediate and unconditional release of prisoners of conscience Javier Tarazona, Rocio San Miguel, Carlos Julio Rojas and Kennedy Tejeda. Indeed, over a thousand people remain unfairly detained for political reasons and they all must be released. Amnesty International is alarmed by the increasing use of enforced



disappearances as a weapon to silence critics. As international crimes go unchecked in Venezuela, it reiterates its call on the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC to expedite its investigation. Amnesty International asks the mission to shed light on the ways in which this Council and States could and should cooperate with international accountability mechanisms, including the FFM and the ICC.

CIVICUS states that civil society in Venezuela is increasingly suffering sophisticated repression. After the elections, the state has imposed terrorism as a mechanism for control using arbitrary detention and forced disappearance. Persecution has pushed defenders, electoral witnesses and political actors interested in exile. Removing key voices and weakening civic space worsened by the ‘anti-NGO law’ which restricts freedom of association and criminalises the work of NGOs. In addition, there is increased surveillance, bullying and the use of the judiciary to persecute those who speak out. The closure of civic space in Venezuela is not a threat but a reality. Thousands of people have no access to help and no protection mechanisms. Women are at the centre of the crisis. The families of persons arbitrarily detained have taken a key role in denouncing abuses and facing threats and reprisals because they have called for justice. Human rights defenders, many of them are community leaders and heads of households have been targeted by stigmatisation and persecution. Recent releases do not guarantee justice or reparations. Most of the court cases continue open and are politically motivated. CIVICUS calls on the UNHRC to demand guarantees so that organisations can work without reprisals or arbitrary restrictions and calls on the international community to keep Venezuela as a priority and take tangible measures to guarantee protection of human rights.

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

45 State Delegations

2 Inter-Governmental Organizations

10 Non-Governmental Organizations