



The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
Joint Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review
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**Submission by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation,
NGO in General Consultative Status with ECOSOC status
and
Espacio Público**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations (CSOs) and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society around the world. Founded in 1993, CIVICUS has members in over 180 countries throughout the world.
- 1.2 Espacio Público is a Venezuelan civil association, founded in 2002, dedicated to defending and promoting freedom of expression, the right to information and media accountability.
- 1.3 In this submission, CIVICUS and Espacio Público examine the Government of Venezuela's compliance with its international human rights obligations to create and maintain a safe and enabling environment for civil society. Specifically, we analyse Venezuela's fulfilment of the rights to freedoms of association, expression and peaceful assembly and unwarranted restrictions on human rights defenders (HRDs) since its previous UPR examination in January 2022. We assess Venezuela's implementation of recommendations received during the 3rd UPR cycle relating to these issues and provide follow-up recommendations.
- 1.4 During the 3rd UPR cycle, the Government of Venezuela received 80 recommendations relating to the space for civil society (civic space). It accepted 43 recommendations and noted 37. However, an evaluation of a range of legal sources and human rights documentation addressed in this submission demonstrates that the government has partly implemented only five recommendations. Rather than undertaking reforms, authorities have consolidated an administrative, institutional and legal framework that heavily restricts civic space.¹
- 1.5 Venezuela's political context changed abruptly on 3 January 2026, following US military operations that UN human rights experts and human rights organisations described as unlawful, resulting in Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores being transferred to US custody to face federal drug-related charges.² Although the change in leadership created limited space for renewed civil society activity and engagement,³ senior officials have remained

¹ 'UN experts and human rights organisations express concern over Venezuela after unlawful US military intervention and emergency declaration', CIVICUS Monitor, 23 January 2026, <https://monitor.civicus.org/explore/un-experts-and-human-rights-organisations-express-concern-over-venezuela>.

² Ibid.

³ 'Although the repressive architecture remains intact, a small window of hope has opened', CIVICUS Lens interview, 5 February 2026, <https://lens.civicus.org/interview/venezuela-although-the-repressive-architecture-remains-intact-a-small-window-of-hope-has-opened>; 'An economically stable authoritarian model could become entrenched', CIVICUS Lens interview, 27 February 2026, <https://lens.civicus.org/interview/venezuela-an-economically-stable-authoritarian-model-could-become-entrenched>.

in office and institutions implicated in human rights violations have continued to operate without structural reform.⁴

- 1.6 We are deeply concerned about the sharp deterioration of civic space that followed the disputed presidential election of 28 July 2024.⁵ Civil society has documented widespread human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment, censorship, surveillance and reprisals against HRDs and journalists. The authorities' post-election response demonstrated a systematic policy of suppressing dissent and views perceived as contrary to government interests.
- 1.7 We are further alarmed by the progressively tightened restrictions on freedom of association, including the adoption of the Law Against Hatred, the Law on the Oversight, Regulation, Operation and Financing of Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Social Organisations, the Simón Bolívar Law and Supreme Court resolutions establishing and expanding courts with special jurisdiction over terrorism-related offences.
- 1.8 As a result, civic space in Venezuela is currently classified as closed by the CIVICUS Monitor, indicating the existence of the most severe civic space restrictions.⁶
 - Section 2 of this submission examines Venezuela's implementation of UPR recommendations and compliance with international human rights standards concerning freedom of association.
 - Section 3 examines Venezuela's implementation of UPR recommendations and compliance with international human rights standards related to the protection of civil society activists, HRDs and journalists.

⁴ 'Venezuelan civil society and international human rights organisations present ten urgent demands for a genuine democratic transition', CIVICUS et al., 21 January 2026, <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/8063-venezuelan-civil-society-and-international-human-rights-organisations-present-ten-urgent-demands-for-a-genuine-democratic-transition>; 'Venezuela: Uncertainty in Venezuela must give way to meaningful human rights change, UN Fact-Finding Mission says', UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (FFM), 12 March 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/03/venezuela-uncertainty-venezuela-must-give-way-meaningful-human-rights-change>; 'Venezuela: Democracy no closer', CIVICUS Lens, 29 January 2026, <https://lens.civicus.org/venezuela-democracy-no-closer>.

⁵ 'Civic freedoms under threat amid disputed presidential elections', CIVICUS Monitor, 9 November 2024, <https://monitor.civicus.org/explore/civic-freedoms-under-threat-amid-disputed-presidential-elections>; 'Venezuela: the democratic transition that wasn't', CIVICUS Lens, 30 January 2025, <https://lens.civicus.org/venezuela-the-democratic-transition-that-wasnt>; 'One year after 28J: Repression has not silenced dissent', Espacio Público, 25 July 2025, <https://espaciopublico.org/a-un-ano-de-28j-represion-no-es-silencio-informe-especial>.

⁶ CIVICUS Monitor: Venezuela, <https://monitor.civicus.org/country/venezuela>.

- Section 4 examines Venezuela’s implementation of UPR recommendations and compliance with international human rights standards concerning freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information.
- Section 5 examines Venezuela’s implementation of UPR recommendations and compliance with international human rights standards related to freedom of peaceful assembly.
- Section 6 contains recommendations to address the concerns raised and advance implementation of recommendations under the 3rd cycle.
- Section 7 is an annex on the implementation of 3rd cycle UPR recommendations related to civic space.

2. Freedom of association

- 2.1** During Venezuela’s examination under the 3rd UPR cycle, the government received 17 recommendations on the right to freedom of association and creating an enabling environment for CSOs. The government committed to ‘Ensure a free environment that enables the work of civil society organisations’. The government accepted 11 recommendations and noted six. However, it has not implemented any.
- 2.2** Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Venezuela has been a state party since 1978, guarantees freedom of association.⁷ Articles 52 and 67 of the constitution protect association for lawful and political purposes.⁸ Despite these guarantees, independent civil society operates within a highly restrictive legal and administrative framework.
- 2.3** The Law for the Control, Regularisation, Performance and Financing of Non-Profit Social Organisations, known as the Anti-NGO Law, was approved in August 2024 and promulgated in November 2024. It imposes extensive registration, disclosure and supervisory requirements, administered by the state registry and notary authority and the ministries responsible for foreign affairs and justice.⁹ Existing organisations had 90

⁷ Article 22(2) of the ICCPR states that: ‘No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on members of the armed forces and of the police in their exercise of this right’.

⁸ Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 1999, <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/storage/documentos/botones/constitucion-nacional-20191205135853.PDF>.

⁹ Law for the Control, Regularisation, Performance and Financing of Non-Profit Social Organisations, November 2024, <https://tugacetaoficial.com/leyes/texto-ley-de-fiscalizacion-regularizacion-actuacion-y-financiamiento-de-las-organizaciones-no-gubernamentales-y-organizaciones-sociales-sin-fines-de-lucro>.

days to update their registration details and 180 days to amend their statutes. Failure to comply could result in cancellation of their registration.¹⁰ CSOs attempting to comply noted that registry offices refused applications or demanded documents not required by law,¹¹ including five years of financial records and documents bearing signatures and fingerprints.¹² These requirements exposed confidential information and placed a disproportionate burden on smaller organisations.¹³

- 2.4** Articles 15, 16 and 23 allow authorities to refuse registration where they consider that an organisation promotes ‘fascism, intolerance or hatred’. Article 23 prohibits organisations from carrying out activities ‘proper to political parties or organisations with political purposes’. These vague and overly broad provisions give officials substantial discretion. Non-compliance with the law may lead to disproportionate fines, suspension before judicial determination, dissolution, loss of registration and, for foreign staff, expulsion.
- 2.5** These restrictions have significantly weakened civil society. On 13 March 2025, Transparency International announced that its Venezuela chapter would continue operating from exile because the Anti-NGO Law was incompatible with its work.¹⁴ On 15 May 2025, Alimenta La Solidaridad suspended operations, stating that the law had created conditions and risks that made its community and humanitarian programmes unviable, interrupting the provision of daily meals to around 12,000 children.¹⁵

¹⁰ CIVICUS Monitor, 9 November 2024, op. cit.; ‘Law for the Control, Regularisation, Performance and Financing of Non-Profit Social Organisations’, Acceso a la Justicia, February 2025, <https://accesoalajusticia.org/ley-fiscalizacion-regularizacion-actuacion-y-financiamiento-organizaciones-no-gubernamentales-y-organizaciones-sociales-sin-fines-de-lucro>.

¹¹ Once registered, organisations must disclose funding sources, identify donors, submit extensive information on their internal affairs and undergo annual reviews. These requirements fail to distinguish between legitimate transparency obligations and disproportionate disclosure capable of exposing organisations, staff, donors, beneficiaries and partners to retaliation, stigmatisation and surveillance. They are not tied to any individualised finding of risk, wrongdoing or necessity. See ‘Venezuela’s new NGO law and US funding freeze are a death blow to the country’s civil society’, WOLA, 2 April 2026, <https://www.wola.org/analysis/venezuelas-new-ngo-law-and-u-s-funding-freeze-are-a-death-blow-to-the-countrys-civil-society>.

¹² ‘Civil society organisations in Venezuela on the edge’, Due Process of Law, 6 June 2025, <https://dplf.org/en/2025/08/06/civil-society-organizations-in-venezuela-on-the-edge>.

¹³ ‘Analysis of the Law on the Oversight, Regulation, Operation and Financing of Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Social Organisations’, Espacio Público, 2 May 2025, <https://espaciopublico.org/analisis-de-la-ley-de-fiscalizacion-regularizacion-actuacion-y-financiamiento-de-las-organizaciones-no-gubernamentales-y-organizaciones-sociales-sin-fines-de-lucro-2>.

¹⁴ ‘Venezuela: Transparency International forced into exile amid growing repression of civil society’, Transparency International, 13 March 2025, <https://www.transparency.org/en/press/venezuela-transparency-international-forced-into-exile-amid-growing-repression-of-civil-society>; WOLA, 2 April 2025, op. cit.

¹⁵ ‘NGO Alimenta la Solidaridad suspends operations in Venezuela’, Efecto Cocuyo, 15 May 2025, <https://efectococuyo.com/la-humanidad/ong-alimenta-la-solidaridad-pausa-sus-operaciones-en-venezuela>.

- 2.6** A 2025 survey of 101 organisations found that 41.9 per cent had not been able to regularise their legal status and 63.4 per cent had reduced or suspended services during the Anti-NGO Law’s implementation. Officials have published no data on rejected registrations, sanctions, suspensions or dissolutions.¹⁶
- 2.7** The Organic Law of the Liberator Simón Bolívar against the Imperialist Blockade and in Defence of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, known as the Simón Bolívar Law, promulgated on 29 November 2024, further narrows the space for CSOs engaged in international advocacy.¹⁷ The law applies broadly to domestic and foreign natural and legal persons who promote, invoke, support or participate in unilateral coercive measures or actions against national security. Its vague scope creates uncertainty over which advocacy activities may trigger liability, encouraging self-censorship and reducing international engagement. It provides for 25 to 30 years’ imprisonment, asset confiscation and other sanctions.¹⁸ In March 2025, National Assembly President Jorge Rodríguez publicly urged its use against Venezuelans who supported international sanctions.¹⁹
- 2.8** Despite this restrictive environment, CSOs have played a vital role in responding to Venezuela’s prolonged humanitarian crisis.²⁰ At the start of 2026, the UN estimated that 7.9 million people, over a quarter of the population, needed humanitarian assistance.²¹ The two devastating earthquakes of 24 June 2026²² further exacerbated humanitarian

¹⁶ ‘CHAPTER IV.B VENEZUELA’, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), 2025, page 831, https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/docs/anual/2025/Capitulos/IA2025_4B_VEN_ES.PDF; ‘IACHR Receives Complaints on the Impact of the Anti-NGO Law in Venezuela’, Acceso a la Justicia, 2 September 2025, <https://accesoalajusticia.org/cidh-recibe-denuncias-sobre-impacto-ley-antisociedad-venezuela>.

¹⁷ CIVICUS Monitor, 14 June 2025, op. cit.; ‘Analysis of the Simón Bolívar Law: Increased self-censorship and facilitation of persecution’, Espacio Público, 20 December 2024, <https://espaciopublico.org/ley-simon-bolivar-aumenta-la-autocensura-y-facilita-la-persecucion-analisis-de-la-ley>.

¹⁸ ‘Is the distinction between censorship and self-censorship becoming increasingly blurred in Venezuela in 2026?’, Espacio Público, 12 June 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/se-desdibuja-censura-autocensura-venezuela-2026>.

¹⁹ ‘National Assembly President Jorge Rodríguez urged the Public Prosecutor’s Office to apply the Simón Bolívar Law against Venezuelans who publicly support sanctions against the country’, National Assembly, 6 March 2025, <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/noticias/diputado-jorge-rodriguez-exhortamos-al-mp-aplicar-ley-bolivar-a-venezolanos-que-celebran-sanciones-contr-el-pais>.

²⁰ ‘Crisis in Venezuela, Bulletin No. 75, 25 February-4 March 2019’, CEPAZ, April 2019, <https://cepaz.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Bolet-n-75-Crisis-En-Venezuela-ES-A.pdf>; ‘Venezuela: Recovery and reconstruction require civil society, say UN experts’, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 17 July 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/07/venezuela-recovery-and-reconstruction-require-civil-society-say-un-experts>.

²¹ Archived page on the earthquake emergency, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), <https://web.archive.org/web/20260719052223/https://www.unocha.org/venezuela>.

²² According to government figures, the 7.2 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes killed over 5,000 people and caused widespread destruction of homes, public infrastructure and other buildings across the country’s northern regions, including in the capital, Caracas. The government estimates that around 17,000 people were injured and almost 18,000 remain homeless. See ‘Venezuela quakes caused \$19.6 billion in damage, World Bank report shows’,

needs.²³ In the immediate aftermath, CSOs and volunteers supported rescue operations, traced missing people and distributed food, medicines and other relief supplies,²⁴ before the state deployed an initial militarised response.²⁵

- 2.9** Authorities also obstructed community-led relief efforts. Between 25 June and 2 July 2026, Espacio Público documented at least seven incidents across five states in which public officials closed, attempted to take over or assumed control of community-run aid centres. On 25 June 2026, police closed a collection centre in Obispos, Barinas, preventing the receipt and distribution of donations. On 30 June 2026, a volunteer interpreters' network supporting foreign rescue teams was forced to shut down its website and delete its database after reports that officers of the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence (DGCIM) and the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (SEBIN) were targeting its volunteers.²⁶ These reports were particularly concerning given the UN Fact-Finding Mission's findings that DGCIM and SEBIN have been central to the state's policy of repression, including serious human rights violations.²⁷

3. Harassment, intimidation and attacks against civil society activists, human rights defenders and journalists

- 3.1** Under Venezuela's previous UPR examination, the government received 38 recommendations on the protection of civil society activists, HRDs and journalists. It accepted 14 recommendations and noted 24. It committed to 'Ensure that human rights defenders are protected from harassment, criminalisation and persecution, and adopt

Reuters, 23 July 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/venezuela-quakes-caused-196-billion-damage-world-bank-report-shows-2026-07-23>.

²³ 'Earthquakes in Venezuela: Situation Report #20 (13 July 2026, Time: 09:00 pm)', OCHA, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/earthquakes-venezuela-situation-report-20-13-july-2026-time-0900-pm>.

²⁴ '48 hours after the earthquake: The State's unfulfilled obligations in La Guaira', PROVEA, 27 June 2026, <https://provea.org/actualidad/48-horas-despues-del-terremoto-la-deuda-del-estado-en-la-guaira>.

²⁵ 'Delayed orders, confusion slowed Venezuelan military's response to quakes, sources say', Reuters, 18 July 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/delayed-orders-confusion-slowed-venezuelan-militarys-response-quakes-sources-say-2026-07-18>; 'The inadequate State response: The disaster began before the earthquake', Transparencia Venezuela in Exile, 16 July 2026, <https://transparenciave.org/la-insuficiente-respuesta-estatal-el-desastre-ocurrio-antes-del-doble-terremoto>; 'Militarized response to the earthquake in Venezuela raises risks for civic space and humanitarian action', EU SEE, 2 July 2026, <https://eusee.hivos.org/alert/militarized-response-to-the-earthquake-in-venezuela-raises-risks-for-civic-space-and-humanitarian-action>.

²⁶ 'Freedom of association and the twin earthquakes in Venezuela', Espacio Público, 10 July 2026, <https://manifestar.org/libertad-de-asociacion-y-doble-terremoto-en-venezuela>.

²⁷ 'Venezuela: new UN report details responsibilities for crimes against humanity to repress dissent and highlights situation in remotes mining areas', FFM, 20 September 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/09/venezuela-new-un-report-details-responsibilities-crimes-against-humanity>.

[a] policy for the protection of human rights defenders'. However, it only partly implemented five of the recommendations it had noted, mainly relating to the release of political prisoners.²⁸

3.2 Article 12 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders mandates states to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of HRDs. The ICCPR further guarantees freedoms of association, expression and peaceful assembly. In spite of these protections, civil society activists, HRDs and journalists have been subjected to arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, judicial harassment, killings, torture, travel bans and transnational repression.

3.3 Environmental and Indigenous HRDs have faced killings, physical attacks and threats primarily linked to illegal mining, the control of Indigenous territories by non-state armed groups and encroachment on ancestral lands. In June 2022, non-state armed groups in Autana, Amazonas state killed Virgilio Trujillo Aarana, an Uwottüja environmental and territorial guardian. In September 2024, Joaquín Hernández, an Ayukuweni territorial guardian from Tencua, was fatally attacked after opposing mining activities. No one has been held accountable for the killings.²⁹

3.4 In May 2025, a landowner in Tokuko, Zulia state, allegedly killed Yukpa chief Cesáreo Panapera and injured three community members in an armed attack, amid a long-running land dispute over agricultural activities conducted without the Yukpa people's free, prior and informed consent. In February 2026, unknown armed men attacked the Great Council of Pemón Chiefs in Santa Elena de Uairén after it decided to end mining in Pemón territory, assaulting staff and an environmental and territorial guardian.³⁰

3.5 Venezuela has not ratified the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation, and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Escazú Agreement, which includes specific measures for the protection of environmental HRDs.³¹ Venezuela also lacks a specialised, adequately resourced and

²⁸ See recommendations: 31.129, 31.130, 31.131, 31.193 and 31.212. Even in these cases, releases have not consistently amounted to full and unconditional liberty. They have not been accompanied by reparations, an end to persecution or the structural reforms needed to prevent further violations.

²⁹ 'The Venezuelan Amazon's memory at risk: the impact of mining extractivism on Indigenous peoples and the environment', PROVEA et al., March 2026, <https://provea.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Memoria-de-la-Amazonia-venezolana-en-riesgo.pdf>.

³⁰ 'Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 23 June 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session62/advance-versions/a-hrc-62-50-auv.pdf>.

³¹ Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation, and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, <https://observatoriop10.cepal.org/en/treaty/regional-agreement-access-information-public-participation-and-justice-environmental-matters>.

independent legal and institutional framework for the prevention, protection and investigation of attacks against HRDs, including environmental and Indigenous defenders. Instead, HRDs must rely on ordinary judicial and prosecutorial institutions, whose effectiveness and independence have repeatedly been questioned by UN³² and Inter-American mechanisms.³³ These shortcomings reflect the broader erosion of the rule of law³⁴ and structural weaknesses in the administration of justice.³⁵

3.6 The Centre for Defenders and Justice (CDJ), a Venezuelan organisation monitoring attacks against CSOs and HRDs, recorded 979 incidents in 2024, an 87 per cent increase from 2023, with more than a third occurring after the disputed July 2024 election.³⁶ Although reported incidents fell to 455 in 2025³⁷ and 122 in the first quarter of 2026,³⁸ criminalisation, intimidation and stigmatisation of HRDs remained dominant. CSOs stated the decline may partly reflect under-reporting and the chilling effect of repression rather than an improvement in conditions.³⁹ Fear of reprisals has reduced the visibility of CSOs and HRDs, discouraged public advocacy and led victims to refrain from reporting violations.⁴⁰

³² 'The government apparatus, its repressive mechanisms and restrictions on civic and democratic space', FFM, Doc. A/HRC/54/CRP.8, 18 September 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session54/advance-versions/A_HRC_54_CRP.8_EN_0.pdf.

³³ 'CHAPTER IV.B VENEZUELA', IACHR, 2024, page 5, https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/docs/anual/2024/capitulos/IA2024_4B_VEN_ES.PDF; 'Precautionary Measure No. 438-15, Resolution 26/2024, Members of the Venezuelan Program of Education-Action on Human Rights (PROVEA) regarding Venezuela 29 April 2024 (Follow-up and Extension)', IACHR, https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/decisions/mc/2024/res_26-24_mc_438-15_ve_en.pdf; 'Precautionary Measure No. 1892-25, Resolution 2/2026, José Luis Subero Reyes regarding Venezuela, 9 January 2026', IACHR, https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/decisions/mc/2026/res_2-26_mc_1892-25_ve_en.pdf.

³⁴ Venezuela, World Justice Project, 2025, <https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/global/2025/Venezuela%2C%20RB>.

³⁵ 'Annual report 2025: Justice delayed in Venezuela', Acceso a la Justicia, 1 July 2026, <https://accesoalajusticia.org/informe-anual-2025-justicia-aplazada-venezuela>.

³⁶ 'The situation of human rights defenders in Venezuela in 2024', Centre for Defenders and Justice (CDJ), January 2025, <https://centrodefensores.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/CDJReporteAnual2024.pdf>.

³⁷ 'The situation of human rights defenders in Venezuela in 2025', CDJ, January 2026, <https://centrodefensores.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CDJReporteAnual2025.pdf>.

³⁸ 'The situation of human rights defenders in Venezuela in the first quarter of 2026, CDJ, April 2026, <https://centrodefensores.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/CDJ-ReportePrimerTrimestre2026.pdf>.

³⁹ Espacio Público, 12 June 2026, op. cit.

⁴⁰ 'Annual Report. The decline of the right to participation consolidated in Venezuela in 2025', PROVEA, 22 May 2026, <https://provea.org/actualidad/participacion>; 'VOICES 2026. An analysis of the survival and resilience strategies adopted by Venezuelan women human rights defenders in response to the closure of civic space', Equalia – Voces que Resisten, March 2026, <https://provea.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Voces-que-resisten-Equalia.pdf>.

- 3.7** Authorities continue to abuse the criminal justice system as a tool of repression against HRDs and journalists by using broadly framed national security and public order offences, including conspiracy and treason under the Penal Code⁴¹ and criminal association and terrorism under the 2012 Organic Law against Organised Crime and Terrorist Financing,⁴² in proceedings marked by serious due process violations and ill-treatment.⁴³
- 3.8** On 9 February 2024, DGCIM officers detained HRD and lawyer Rocío San Miguel and five family members at Simón Bolívar International Airport. Her whereabouts were concealed for several days before officials confirmed that she was in SEBIN custody at El Helicoide detention centre in Caracas,⁴⁴ where UN mechanisms have documented torture and other ill-treatment.⁴⁵ She was charged before a terrorism court with conspiracy, criminal association, terrorism and treason, exposing her to penalties of up to 30 years' imprisonment.⁴⁶ San Miguel was released on 8 January 2026, but the proceedings remain open and she is subject to conditional measures, including a ban on speaking publicly about the case.⁴⁷
- 3.9** On 15 April 2024, two hooded men dressed in black forced journalist and community activist Carlos Julio Rojas into an unmarked vehicle near his home in Caracas. Officials initially refused to disclose his whereabouts until the attorney general publicly accused Rojas of acting as an 'instigator' and 'logistical operator' in an alleged attempt to assassinate Nicolás Maduro on 25 March 2024, effectively acknowledging that he was in state custody.⁴⁸ Two days later, Rojas was brought before a court with special jurisdiction over terrorism offences. He had been unable to communicate with his family or lawyers, and the court imposed a public defender despite his express request to be represented by privately retained counsel. Rojas was charged with attempted

⁴¹ Articles 128 and 132 of the Penal Code, 13 April 2005, <https://www.tsj.gob.ve/codigos>.

⁴² Articles 37 and 52 of the Organic Law against Organised Crime and Terrorist Financing, 30 April 2012, <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/storage/documentos/leyes/ley-organi-20211109155512.pdf>.

⁴³ 'Venezuela: Overview of recent restrictions to civic freedoms', CIVICUS Monitor, March 2024, <https://monitor.civicus.org/watchlist-march-2024>.

⁴⁴ 'Venezuela: Venezuelan human rights defender and her family arrested', Amnesty International, 13 February 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr53/7707/2024/en>.

⁴⁵ 'Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', FFM, Doc. A/HRC/51/43, 17 November 2022, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/51/43>.

⁴⁶ 'Venezuelan defender must be released', Amnesty International, 20 February 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/ar/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/AMR5377342024ENGLISH.pdf>.

⁴⁷ 'Chronology of the Case of Rocío San Miguel', Acceso a la Justicia, 27 May 2026, <https://accesoalajusticia.org/cronologia-del-caso-de-rocio-san-miguel>; 'Human Rights defender and lawyer Rocío San Miguel Released from Detention', Espacio Público, 11 January 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/excarcelan-a-la-defensora-de-ddhh-y-abogada-rocio-san-miguel>.

⁴⁸ 'Masked men forcibly abduct journalist and activist Carlos Julio Rojas', Espacio Público, 15 April 2024, <https://espaciopublico.org/encapuchados-se-llevaron-a-la-fuerza-al-periodista-y-activista-carlos-julio-rojas>.

assassination, criminal association and instigation to commit an offence, conspiracy and terrorism.⁴⁹

3.10 Rojas was held at El Helicoide for nearly two years. He was conditionally released on 14 January 2026.⁵⁰ On 17 April 2026, a judge informed Rojas that his application for amnesty had been refused, without providing reasons.⁵¹ Rojas's case illustrates broader concerns about the selective and opaque implementation of the 2026 Law on Amnesty for Democratic Coexistence, known as the Amnesty Law,⁵² which was adopted without inclusive, meaningful, and transparent consultation.⁵³

3.11 Authorities released hundreds of people detained for politically motivated reasons during the first half of 2026. By 13 June 2026, Venezuelan human rights organisation Foro Penal had independently verified the release of 894 people. Most were conditional releases. Criminal proceedings have remained open, and some people have remained subject to conditions such as the need to report periodically to the courts, travel bans or

⁴⁹ 'Activist Carlos Julio Rojas brought before court and assigned a public defender', Espacio Público, 18 April 2024, <https://espaciopublico.org/presentan-en-tribunales-al-activista-carlos-julio-rojas-e-imponen-defensa-publica>; 'Venezuela arrests activist for alleged links to Maduro assassination attempt', Reuters, 16 April 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-arrests-activist-alleged-links-maduro-assassination-attempt-2024-04-16>; 'Activist Carlos Julio Rojas brought before court and assigned a public defender', Espacio Público, 18 April 2024, <https://espaciopublico.org/presentan-en-tribunales-al-activista-carlos-julio-rojas-e-imponen-defensa-publica>.

⁵⁰ 'Carlos Julio Rojas: A journalist who refuses to yield to injustice', Espacio Público, 9 February 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/carlos-julio-rojas-el-periodista-que-no-se-dobleaga-ante-la-injusticia>.

⁵¹ 'Journalist Carlos Julio Rojas's amnesty request rejected', Espacio Público, 20 April 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/niegan-solicitud-de-amnistia-al-periodista-carlos-julio-rojas>.

⁵² 'The Amnesty Law for Democratic Coexistence approved in Venezuela', EU SEE, 1 April 2026, <https://eusee.hivos.org/alert/the-amnesty-law-for-democratic-coexistence-approved-in-venezuela>.

⁵³ Law on Amnesty for Democratic Coexistence, 19 February 2026, <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/storage/documentos/botones/ley-de-amnistia-2026-20260223000136.pdf>. The law purports to grant a 'general and full amnesty' for offences committed between 1 January 1999 and the date of the law's entry into force, with the stated aims of promoting democratic coexistence, political pluralism, social peace and the reintegration of beneficiaries into public life. Its scope is nevertheless narrower than this language suggests. Eligibility is limited to offences committed 'in the context' of 13 specified political events, including protests and politically motivated violence surrounding the 2013, 2014, 2017, 2019, 2024 and 2025 elections and demonstrations. See also: 'Statement by Ms. María Eloísa Quintero, Member of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', Human Rights Council, 61st Session, 12 March 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/ffmv/20260312-ffm-venezuela-oral-update-en.pdf>.

other restrictions.⁵⁴ Foro Penal also documented in early July 2026 that at least 372 people it classified as political prisoners remained arbitrarily detained.⁵⁵

3.12 As of 26 March 2026, according to official figures, measures had been granted under the Amnesty Law in relation to 8,146 people. Authorities also stated that 310 people were released from detention, and precautionary measures affecting a further 7,836 people, including travel bans and requirements to report periodically to the courts, had been lifted. However, they have not published a complete list of those concerned or sufficient information to establish whether the announced measures have been fully implemented. This lack of transparency has prevented independent verification of the official figures.⁵⁶ Human Rights Watch has also found that, in some cases, judges failed to provide reasoned legal grounds for refusing amnesty, restricted access to case files and applied the law inconsistently to HRDs, journalists and opposition figures.⁵⁷

3.13 Authorities have targeted trade union activists for their labour rights activism. On 1 August 2023, a criminal court sentenced Néstor Astudillo, Gabriel Blanco, Alcides Bracho, Reynaldo Cortés, Alfonso Meléndez and Emilio Negrín to 16 years' imprisonment for conspiracy and criminal association. The six trade unionists were arrested in July 2022 and subsequently prosecuted after they participated in several protests led by public sector teachers demanding better wages and respect for their labour rights.⁵⁸

3.14 The government has restricted HRDs' and journalists' freedom of movement by arbitrarily cancelling, confiscating or refusing to renew their passports. By May 2025, authorities had unlawfully revoked at least 40 people's passports.⁵⁹ HRDs in exile may

⁵⁴ 'Foro Penal reports the release of 894 political prisoners since 8 January', Foro Penal, 13 June 2026, <https://foropenal.com/articulo/se-han-excarcelado-894-presos-politicos-desde-el-8-de-enero-informa-foro-penal>.

⁵⁵ 'Foro Penal documents 372 political prisoners in Venezuela, including 37 foreign nationals', Foro Penal, 8 July 2026, <https://foropenal.com/articulo/foro-penal-contabiliza-372-presos-politicos-en-venezuela-entre-ellos-37-extranjeros>.

⁵⁶ 'Venezuela's amnesty slows down. What's next?', EFE, 5 April 2026, <https://efe.com/mundo/2026-04-05/venezuela-amnistia-liberaciones-excarcelaciones-presos-politicos>; 'Amnesty: full freedom, but selective', Espacio Público, 26 March 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/amnistia-libertad-plena-pero-selectiva>.

⁵⁷ 'Venezuela: Exclusions, procedures mar Amnesty Law', Human Rights Watch, 13 May 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/05/13/venezuela-exclusions-procedures-mar-amnesty-law>.

⁵⁸ 'Venezuela: Six trade unionists sentenced to 16 years in prison on conspiracy charges', Associated Press, 2 August 2023, <https://apnews.com/world-news/general-news-c6d40108e246c32d596fd3dff13c069d>; 'Venezuela continues to crack down on civic space freedoms', CIVICUS Monitor, 20 October 2023, <https://monitor.civicus.org/explore/venezuela-continues-to-crack-down-on-civic-space-freedoms>.

⁵⁹ 'Venezuelan WHRD detained and exiled defenders shot amid ongoing crackdown', CIVICUS Monitor, 22 November 2025, <https://monitor.civicus.org/explore/venezuelan-whrd-detained-and-exiled-defenders-shot-amid-ongoing-crackdown>; CIVICUS Monitor, 14 June 2025, op. cit.

also face serious security risks and acts of transnational repression.⁶⁰ In October 2025, Venezuelan HRD Yendri Velásquez and political consultant Luis Peché Arteaga were shot and injured by unknown assailants in Colombia. Both had left Venezuela due to the post-election crackdown.⁶¹ The attack illustrates the security risks faced by Venezuelan defenders in exile, although no evidence has been made public linking the assailants to Venezuelan officials.⁶²

3.15 The attack came after reprisals linked to Velásquez's engagement with international human rights mechanisms. In August 2024, security forces arbitrarily detained Velásquez at Maiquetía International Airport as he attempted to travel to Geneva to participate in Venezuela's review before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.⁶³ While detained, Velásquez reported that he had been subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment during prolonged interrogations.⁶⁴

3.16 People who criticised the authorities' earthquake response faced intimidation and reprisals. On 1 July 2026, men identifying themselves as criminal-investigation police officers arbitrarily detained Wilmer Antonio Cruz, who had denounced the lack of rescue equipment. Officials concealed his whereabouts until his conditional release on 3 July 2026, subject to periodic reporting, reportedly in connection with an alleged theft offence.⁶⁵ His detention, shortly after his public criticism, raised concerns that the

⁶⁰ 'TNR Watch: Venezuelan Transnational Repression', Freedom House, 13 November 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/tnr-watch-venezuelan-transnational-repression>.

⁶¹ 'Human rights activist among two Venezuelans attacked in Colombia', Reuters, 14 October 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/human-rights-activist-among-two-venezuelans-attacked-colombia-2025-10-13>; 'Attack on two Venezuelans triggers fear among Venezuelan exiles in Bogotá: We thought we were safe here', El País, 15 October 2025, <https://elpais.com/amercia-colombia/2025-10-15/el-atentado-contra-dos-venezolanos-siempra-el-panico-entre-los-exiliados-en-bogota-pensabamos-que-aqui-estabamos-seguros.html>.

⁶² 'Six months of impunity, the attempted murder of Yendri Velásquez and Luis Peché demands an urgent response', World Organisation Against Torture, 15 April 2026, <https://www.omct.org/en/resources/statements/seis-meses-de-impunidad-el-intento-de-asesinato-contra-yendri-vel%C3%A1squez-y-luis-peche-exige-una-respuesta-urgente>.

⁶³ 'Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Doc. A/HRC/59/58, 28 August 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/59/58#page=6>; 'Cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights', Report of the Secretary-General, Doc. A/HRC/60/62, 9 September 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session60/advance-version/a-hrc-60-62-aev.pdf#page=40>.

⁶⁴ 'We condemn the attack on Venezuelan human rights defender and asylum seeker in Colombia Yendri Velásquez', The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, 15 October 2025, <https://observatoryfordefenders.org/alert/condenamos-ataque-contra-yendri-velasquez-defensor-de-derechos-humanos-venezolano-y-solicitante-de-refugio-en-colombia>.

⁶⁵ 'El Topo de La Guaira released following court appearance', Runrun.es, 4 July 2026, <https://runrun.es/noticias/613539/excarcelan-al-topo-de-la-guaira-tras-presentarlo-en-tribunales>; Tweet by PROVEA, 3 July 2026, <https://x.com/Provea/status/2073202508478960115>.

criminal proceedings may have constituted a reprisal. On 10 July, Damely Yaneth Díaz, whose six-year-old daughter died in collapsed state-built housing, confronted senior officials. She later alleged that a bodyguard forcibly grabbed her arm, leaving bruising.⁶⁶

4. Freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information

- 4.1** During the 3rd UPR cycle, Venezuela received 11 recommendations on freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information. It accepted seven recommendations and noted four, including a commitment to ‘Guarantee freedom of expression, and support a plural and safe communication environment’. It has implemented none.
- 4.2** ICCPR article 19 guarantees the rights to freedoms of expression and opinion. Article 57 of the constitution also guarantees the right to freedom of expression and article 58 establishes the right to ‘timely, truthful and impartial information, without censorship’.⁶⁷ However, longstanding legislation, including the 2002 Organic Law on National Security, the 2004 Law on Social Responsibility in Radio, Television and Electronic Media, the 2010 Organic Law on Telecommunications, the 2012 Organic Law against Organised Crime and Terrorist Financing and the 2017 Anti-Hate Law, contains vague and overly broad provisions that allow authorities to control media, censor content and criminalise critics.⁶⁸
- 4.3** Authorities have expanded this restrictive legal framework since 2022. The 2024 Organic Law for the Defence of Guayana Esequiba prohibits and imposes severe fines for publishing maps or other representations of Venezuela that exclude the disputed territory.⁶⁹ Presidential Decree No. 4,975 created a permanent National Cybersecurity Council under the direct authority of the president with broad information-gathering and surveillance powers and without clear legal thresholds, prior judicial authorisation, independent oversight and adequate data protection.⁷⁰ The Simón Bolívar Law criminalises broadly and vaguely defined conduct, including ‘facilitating’, ‘favouring’,

⁶⁶ “God is punishing the politicians’: anger at earthquake response grows in Venezuela’, The Guardian, 14 July 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jul/14/anger-earthquake-response-venezuela>.

⁶⁷ Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 1999, op. cit.

⁶⁸ ‘Compatibility of Venezuelan legislation with International Human Rights Law’, Espacio Público, 18 February 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/incompatibilidades-leyes-venezolanas-derecho-internacional-dd-hh>.

⁶⁹ Organic Law for the Defence of Guayana Esequiba, April 2024, <https://accesoalajusticia.org/ley-organica-para-la-defensa-de-la-guayana-essequiba>.

⁷⁰ ‘National Cybersecurity Council facilitates online surveillance, censorship and persecution’, Espacio Público, 29 August 2024, <https://espaciopublico.org/consejo-nacional-de-ciberseguridad-esta-alineado-con-la-vigilancia-censura-y-persecucion-en-linea>.

‘invoking’, ‘promoting’ or ‘supporting’ foreign coercive measures. It also imposes severe fines on electronic, print and social media that disseminate messages promoting such measures. Radio and television providers may lose their broadcasting concessions, while digital platforms may be denied or deprived of permission to operate in Venezuela.⁷¹

4.4 Criminalisation and intimidation contribute to a hostile environment against independent media. For example, journalists associated with La Patilla were among those subjected to criminalisation and intimidation between 2024 and 2025. On 20 August 2024, SEBIN officers arbitrarily detained Ana Carolina Guaita, who was subsequently charged with incitement to hatred, obstruction and terrorism, held incommunicado and denied access to privately appointed counsel. On 20 February 2025, SEBIN officers arbitrarily detained Rory Branker, concealed his whereabouts, searched his home without judicial authorisation and seized electronic devices, while a senior official publicly accused him of criminal conduct, undermining his right to be presumed innocent. These cases form part of a longer pattern of public vilification and judicial harassment since SEBIN’s launch in 2010.⁷²

4.5 Authorities continue to use telecommunications regulations and opaque administrative procedures to force independent and locally based media outlets to cease operating. Espacio Público documented the closure of at least 81 radio stations in 2022 and 12 free-to-air radio stations in 2023. In 2024, it recorded the closure of 23 media outlets, of which 21 were radio stations, followed by the closure of at least seven radio stations across five states in 2025. The National Telecommunications Commission (CONATEL) typically justified these measures by alleging that stations lacked administrative authorisations or spectrum concessions, or were using the radio spectrum ‘clandestinely’. In several cases, it ordered stations to cease broadcasting immediately and confiscated transmission equipment, without transparent proceedings or effective remedies.⁷³

⁷¹ Simón Bolívar Law, 2024, op. cit.

⁷² ‘Attacks on and detentions of journalists deepen more than a decade of harassment against La Patilla’, Espacio Público, 31 March 2025, <https://espaciopublico.org/agresiones-y-detenciones-de-periodistas-agravan-mas-de-una-decada-de-ataques-a-la-patilla>.

⁷³ ‘Overview of the Right to Freedom of Expression in Venezuela, January-December 2022’, Espacio Público, 27 January 2023, <https://espaciopublico.org/situacion-general-del-derecho-a-la-libertad-de-expresion-en-venezuela-enero-diciembre-2022-informe-preliminar>; ‘Overview of the Right to Freedom of Expression in Venezuela, January-December 2023’, Espacio Público, 3 May 2024, <https://espaciopublico.org/situacion-general-del-derecho-a-la-libertad-de-expresion-en-venezuela-enero>; ‘Elections and Freedom of Expression: Twenty Years of Restrictions’, Espacio Público, 3 May 2024; <https://espaciopublico.org/elecciones-y-libertad-de-expresion-20-anos-de-restricciones-2>; Espacio Público, 29 April 2026, op. cit.

- 4.6** These closures form part of a longer-term contraction of Venezuela’s media landscape. Espacio Público found that between 2003 and 2022, at least 403 media outlets ceased operating, including 285 radio stations, 87 print newspapers, 19 free-to-air television channels and 12 digital media outlets. In a separate assessment published in 2023, it identified 13 states as ‘silenced zones,’ meaning regions in which people had little or no access to media with independent editorial lines. The decline in plural, independent local reporting has significantly restricted access to information, particularly outside Caracas.⁷⁴
- 4.7** Digital censorship intensified around politically sensitive events, particularly in 2024 and 2025. In July and August 2024, after the National Electoral Council announced that Maduro had won the presidential election,⁷⁵ state-owned and private internet providers blocked at least 62 websites, including fact-checking platforms and independent media. During that period, authorities also ordered the blocking of Signal and X/Twitter without due process. On 1 August 2024, internet services operated by the state-owned companies CANTV and Movilnet were disrupted nationwide for almost two hours.⁷⁶
- 4.8** On 10 January 2025, digital censorship intensified around Maduro’s inauguration. At least nine internet providers intermittently blocked TikTok for one month. They also blocked at least 21 VPN websites and public DNS services used to circumvent censorship⁷⁷. By May 2026, 206 domains remained blocked, including 65 media websites, and CONATEL had not responded to a March 2026 request by over 30 CSOs and media outlets requesting the lifting of blocks.⁷⁸
- 4.9** While articles 51 and 143 of the constitution guarantee the right to access public interest information, the 2021 Law on Transparency and Access to Information of Public Interest falls short of international standards.⁷⁹ This became a pronounced problem with serious consequences during the June 2026 earthquake emergency. Press freedom organisations reported that journalists were prevented from freely accessing

⁷⁴ ‘Silenced regions: 13 states of Venezuela without independent media’, Espacio Público, 3 May 2023, <https://espaciopublico.org/zonas-silenciadas>.

⁷⁵ CIVICUS Monitor, 9 November 2024, op. cit.

⁷⁶ ‘Maduro must #KeepItOn in times of protest and unrest’, Access Now, 27 August 2024, <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/maduro-keepiton-during-protest-and-unrest>.

⁷⁷ ‘Censored Network: Restrictions on #InternetVE’, VE Sin Filtro, 17 January 2026, <https://vesinfiltro.org/noticias/2025-censorship-report>.

⁷⁸ ‘VE Sin Filtro calls for an immediate end to internet censorship: 65 media outlets remain blocked in Venezuela’, Correo del Caroní, 13 March 2026, <https://correodelcaroni.com/sociedad/ve-sin-filtro-exige-cese-inmediato-de-la-censura-en-internet-hay-65-medios-bloqueados-en-venezuela>.

⁷⁹ ‘Assessment of the Law on Transparency and Access to Information of Public Interest’, Espacio Público, 2 May 2022, <https://espaciopublico.org/balance-de-la-ley-de-transparencia-y-acceso-a-la-informacion-de-interes-publico>.

affected areas and were subjected to unclear administrative authorisation requirements, while several domestic and international news websites remained blocked.⁸⁰

4.10 Since the earthquake emergency began, journalists have faced restrictions on access to information, alongside public vilification by officials and pro-government groups.⁸¹ On 2 July, acting president Delcy Rodríguez stigmatised media outlets and journalists that challenged the official narrative as the work of politically motivated ‘media laboratories’.⁸² On 15 July, Monagas Governor Ernesto Luna called on local journalists and media outlets to suspend all earthquake-related reporting for 15 days, purportedly to protect the public’s mental health. The available information does not indicate that he cited any legal authority. The same day, Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello used state television to stigmatise foreign correspondents covering the disaster, accusing them of conducting a hostile media campaign.⁸³

5. Freedom of peaceful assembly

5.1 During Venezuela’s examination under the 3rd UPR cycle, the government received 14 recommendations on freedom of peaceful assembly. It committed to ‘Ensure respect for freedom of assembly, opinion, and expression for individuals engaging in peaceful demonstrations, in accordance with the Constitution’. The government accepted 11 recommendations and noted three. However, it has not implemented any.

5.2 ICCPR article 21 guarantees freedom of peaceful assembly. Articles 53 and 68 constitution also enshrine this freedom.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, the government has systematically relied on legal and extra-legal measures to curtail peaceful demonstrations. The Law on Political Parties, Public Meetings and Demonstrations, as amended in 2010, requires prior notification in principle but allows authorities to

⁸⁰ ‘Eight organisations express concern over restrictions on the press during the recent earthquake emergency’, Espacio Público, 15 July 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/ocho-organizaciones-expresan-su-preocupacion-por-las-restricciones-a-la-prensa-durante-la-reciente-emergencia-por-el-terremoto>.

⁸¹ ‘Freedom of expression during the earthquake emergency in Venezuela, 24-28 June 2026’, Espacio Público, 2 July 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/libertad-de-expresion-durante-la-emergencia-por-los-terremotos-en-venezuela-24-al-28-de-junio-de-2026>; ‘Journalists covering rescue operations in La Guaira threatened’, Espacio Público, 6 July 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/amenazan-a-periodistas-que-cubren-labores-de-rescate-en-la-guaira>.

⁸² ‘Delcy Rodríguez accuses ‘media laboratories’ of fuelling chaos following the double earthquake in Venezuela’, El País, 2 July 2026, <https://elpais.com/america/2026-07-03/delcy-rodriguez-culpa-a-laboratorios-mediaticos-del-chaos-en-las-primeras-horas-tras-el-doble-terremoto-en-venezuela.html>.

⁸³ ‘Minister of the Interior, Justice and Peace Harasses the Press Following Earthquake Coverage’, Espacio Público, 17 July 2026, <https://espaciopublico.org/ministro-de-interior-justicia-y-paz-hostiga-a-la-prensa-tras-cobertura-de-sismos>.

⁸⁴ Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 1999, op. cit.

reject or alter the location, route or timing of assemblies.⁸⁵ In 2014 and 2016, the Constitutional Chamber interpreted these provisions as requiring prior authorisation, holding that demonstrations conducted without such authorisation may be prohibited and may expose participants to criminal proceedings for ‘disobedience of authority’.⁸⁶

5.3 The 2002 Organic Law on National Security allows the executive to designate extensive ‘security zones’, while article 56 provides for five to 10 years’ imprisonment for broadly defined activities deemed to affect public services, strategic facilities or the country’s economic and social life.⁸⁷ The 2015 Resolution No. 008610 additionally authorises the armed forces to perform public order functions during demonstrations. Although it states that personnel should not carry or use firearms during peaceful assemblies, it permits their use where considered ‘unavoidable’.⁸⁸ This is inconsistent with article 68 of the constitution and international human rights standards.⁸⁹ The resolution remained in force following a 2025 judicial decision.⁹⁰

5.4 The authorities’ response to protests reached a new level of severity following the contested July 2024 election. Largely peaceful protests spread across Venezuela calling for publication of the polling station-level tally sheets and a transparent vote count.⁹¹ Security forces responded with excessive and, in some cases, lethal force, mass arbitrary detentions and warrantless home raids of protesters, while armed pro-government ‘colectivos’ intimidated and attacked protesters.⁹² Espacio Público

⁸⁵ Law on Political Parties, Public Gatherings and Manifestations, 2010, <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/leyes/sancionadas/ley-de-reforma-parcial-de-la-ley-de-partidos-politicos-reuniones-publicas-y-manifestaciones>.

⁸⁶ ‘Supreme Court reaffirms the right to peaceful assembly provided it does not disrupt public order or violate the Constitution’, Supreme Court of Justice, 17 November 2016, <https://www.tsj.gob.ve/-/tsj-ratifica-derecho-a-manifestar-sin-alterar-el-orden-publico-ni-violar-la-constitucion>.

⁸⁷ Organic Law on National Security, 2002, <https://www.observatoriodeconflictos.org.ve/oc/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Ley-Organica-de-Seguridad-de-la-NAci%C3%B2n.pdf>.

⁸⁸ Resolution No. 008610, 23 January 2015, <https://policehumanrightsresources.org/content/uploads/2016/05/Resolution-008610.pdf?x19059>. See also: Venezuela, The Law on Police Use of Force Worldwide, 2025, <https://www.policinglaw.info/country/venezuela>.

⁸⁹ ‘General comment No. 37 (2020) on the right of peaceful assembly (article 21)’, Human Rights Committee, 17 September 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no-37-article-21-right-peaceful>.

⁹⁰ ‘Political-Administrative Chamber upholds the 2015 rules on the militarisation of public assemblies’, Acceso a la Justicia, 13 March 2025, <https://accesoalajusticia.org/spa-mantiene-vigentes-normas-de-2015-sobre-militarizacion-en-manifestaciones>.

⁹¹ CIVICUS Monitor, 9 November 2024, op. cit.; ‘Social unrest in Venezuela: July 2024’, Observatorio Venezolano de Conflictividad, August 2024, <https://www.observatoriodeconflictos.org.ve/oc/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/INFORMEOVCS-JULIO2024.pdf>.

⁹² ‘Punished for seeking change. Killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention following Venezuela’s 2024 election’, Human Rights Watch, 30 April 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/04/30/punished-seeking-change/killings-enforced-disappearances-and-arbitrary-detention>.

monitored 32 peaceful protests between 29 July and 29 August 2024 and reported that all were repressed.⁹³

5.5 The scale and nature of the repression were subsequently documented by the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission. It found that the post-election demonstrations were violently repressed, documenting 25 deaths. Venezuelan officials acknowledged detaining more than 2,220 people. The UN Mission also documented serious and systematic due process violations and identified indications that at least 27 people, including seven children, had been subjected to short-term enforced disappearance. It concluded that the ‘repression was instigated by the highest civilian and military levels of the state through threatening public statements’.⁹⁴

5.6 In Operación Tun Tun, security forces were sent to the homes of people who had participated in protests or expressed criticism of the government to arrest them. Most people targeted had no clear political affiliation, and in most cases investigated by the UN Mission, detainees were charged with broadly defined offences, including criminal association and terrorism, particularly in cases involving criticism of the government.⁹⁵

5.7 Digital restrictions reinforced this physical crackdown. According to Amnesty International, authorities encouraged people to report protesters through the state-backed VenApp.⁹⁶ Security forces reportedly searched mobile phones and used protest-related messages, photographs and social media content to identify and detain perceived participants.⁹⁷

⁹³ ‘28 July: Terror as a strategy to suppress dissent’, Espacio Público, 10 August 2024,

<https://espaciopublico.org/detenciones-poselectorales-otra-espiral-de-violencia-contra-la-protesta-pacifica>.

⁹⁴ ‘Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela’, FFM, 17 September 2024, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4069503/files/A_HRC_57_57-ES.pdf.

⁹⁵ ‘Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela’, FFM, 6 October 2025, Doc. A/HRC/60/61, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/60/61>; ‘Post-election detentions: Another escalation of violence against peaceful protest’, Espacio Público, 10 August 2024,

<https://espaciopublico.org/detenciones-poselectorales-otra-espiral-de-violencia-contra-la-protesta-pacifica>.

⁹⁶ ‘Venezuela’s many means of surveillance and control’, Access Now, 29 August 2024,

<https://www.accessnow.org/the-many-means-of-surveillance-and-control-in-venezuela>. Access Now states that: ‘VenApp is a way for the state to exploit the population’s needs to promote the use of a technology that leads to the creation of databases, which in turn can enable state monitoring and control. The former is the only way people can access many social benefits, while the latter is a tool that is supposedly used to report failures and disruptions of services, a recurring issue in Venezuela’.

⁹⁷ ‘Venezuela: Tech companies set dangerous precedent with app for reporting anti-government protesters’, Amnesty International, 7 August 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/venezuela-tech-companies-set-dangerous-precedent-with-app-for-reporting-anti-government-protesters>.

5.8 On 29 July 2024, members of the Bolivarian National Guard arbitrarily detained Gina Paola Mercado Núñez after she filmed post-election protests in central Caracas. They reportedly assaulted her, destroyed her telephone and accused her of leading the protest.⁹⁸ She was charged with incitement to hatred, obstruction of a public road and terrorism, held without timely disclosure of her whereabouts and denied access to lawyers of her choice. In detention, she faced gender-based and physical violence, isolation, inadequate food and medical care and severe restrictions on family and legal contact.⁹⁹ Her case illustrates the broader criminalisation of documenting or supporting peaceful protests through the abuse of terrorism-related offences, arbitrary detention, due process violations and punitive detention conditions intended to deter further mobilisation.¹⁰⁰

6. Recommendations to the Government of Venezuela

CIVICUS and Espacio Público call on the Government of Venezuela to create and maintain, in law and in practice, an enabling environment for civil society, in accordance with the rights enshrined in the ICCPR, the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and Human Rights Council resolutions 22/6, 27/5 and 27/31.

At a minimum, the following conditions should be guaranteed: freedoms of association, expression and peaceful assembly, the right to operate free from unwarranted state interference, the right to communicate and cooperate, the right to seek and secure funding and the state's duty to protect. In the light of this, the following specific recommendations are made:

6.1 Freedom of association

- Repeal or substantially amend all laws, regulations and resolutions used to unlawfully restrict freedom of association and bring them into full compliance with international human rights law, particularly ICCPR article 22.
- Refrain from arbitrarily dissolving, suspending or otherwise obstructing CSOs or their legitimate activities, and establish an inclusive, meaningful and sustained dialogue that enables the effective participation of civil society, including those expressing dissenting views.
- End all unlawful interference with independent community and humanitarian initiatives, investigate the closure or takeover of community-run aid centres and

⁹⁸ 'IACHR grants precautionary measures to Gina Paola Mercado Núñez in Venezuela', IACHR, 20 December 2024, <https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/jsForm/?File=/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2024/325.asp>

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

guarantee that CSOs, humanitarian workers and volunteers can provide assistance without reprisals.

- Remove all undue restrictions on the ability of CSOs to receive domestic and international funding in line with best practices articulated by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association.
- Ensure the effective participation of independent civil society in institutional, legislative and transitional processes affecting human rights and the rule of law.

6.2 Protection of civil society activists, human rights defenders and journalists

- Adopt, through meaningful consultation with civil society, a comprehensive law and adequately funded independent mechanism for the prevention, protection and investigation of attacks against HRDs and journalists, with measures tailored to address intersectional discrimination.
- Ratify and fully implement the Escazú Agreement and take immediate measures to protect environmental and Indigenous defenders from attacks.
- Conduct prompt, thorough, independent, impartial and transparent investigations into all acts of torture, enforced disappearances, killings, physical attacks, threats and other reprisals against HRDs and journalists, prosecute those suspected of criminal responsibility, including those in positions of authority or acting with state acquiescence, and provide effective remedies and reparations to victims.
- End the use of criminal association, conspiracy, incitement to hatred, terrorism, treason and other broadly framed national security and public order offences to criminalise legitimate human rights work and journalism and amend the relevant legislation to comply with the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality.
- Immediately and unconditionally release all people arbitrarily detained for exercising their human rights, terminate the related criminal proceedings, lift reporting requirements, travel bans and other precautionary measures, restore confiscated or cancelled passports and provide victims with adequate reparations.
- Refrain from any acts of transnational repression and cooperate fully with investigations by other states into attacks, threats and surveillance targeting Venezuelan activists, HRDs and journalists abroad. Ensure that people are not subjected to reprisals for engaging with global or regional human rights mechanisms.
- Publicly condemn at the highest levels of government instances of harassment and intimidation of civil society activists.

6.3 Freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information

- Repeal or amend legislation that criminalises protected expression through broad and vague offences, and bring them into conformity with ICCPR article 19.
- Reform media regulation in line with ICCPR article 19, ensuring transparent licensing procedures and effective remedies for arbitrary closures and equipment seizures.
- Immediately lift the arbitrary blocking of news websites, messaging services, social media platforms and VPNs and DNS services, and ensure any restriction is lawful, necessary, proportionate and subject to independent judicial review.
- Amend the Law on Transparency and Access to Information of Public Interest to establish maximum-disclosure principles, narrow and harm-tested exceptions, clear response deadlines, proactive publication duties and review by an independent oversight body.
- Ensure that independent CSOs can monitor and scrutinise, without undue restriction, the management of public funds and resources allocated to humanitarian assistance and fully respect and protect the rights to freedoms of association and expression, particularly in the context of the ongoing earthquake emergency response.

6.4 Freedom of peaceful assembly

- Reform the legal framework on peaceful assemblies to remove prior authorisation requirements and related sanctions, and ensure civilian policing in line with international human rights standards.
- Conduct independent investigations into the repression following the July 2024 presidential election, and prosecute all people suspected of criminal responsibility, including commanders and civilian superiors where applicable.

6.5 Access to UN Special Procedures mandate holders and mechanisms

- Extend a standing invitation to all UN Special Procedures mandate holders and prioritise official visits by: 1) Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; 2) Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression; and 3) Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association.
- Cooperate fully with OHCHR, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission and UN Special Procedures, grant them unrestricted access to the country, victims and relevant documentation, and adopt a public and time-bound plan for

implementing their recommendations.

6.6 State engagement with civil society

- Implement transparent, safe and inclusive mechanisms of public consultations with CSOs on all issues mentioned above and enable the more effective involvement of civil society in the preparation of law and policy.
- Include CSOs in the UPR process before finalising and submitting the national report.
- Establish a standing mechanism for dialogue between the state and CSOs to follow up on UPR recommendations and related commitments, ensuring regular and inclusive consultations with a diverse range of civil society.
- Incorporate the results of this UPR into action plans for the promotion and protection of all human rights, taking into account the proposals of civil society, and present a midterm evaluation report to the Human Rights Council on the implementation of the recommendations of this session.

7. Annex: Assessment of implementation of civic space recommendations under the 3rd cycle

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
31.19 Pursue discussions with a view to ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Senegal); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.10	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.198 Take concrete measures to ensure freedoms of opinion and expression as well as freedom of media, taking into account reports submitted by human rights treaty bodies and institutions (Japan); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 3
31.114 Conduct a review of the laws and regulations on terrorism financing, registration and funding that are imposed on civil society organisations, to ensure they are in line with international human rights standards (Ireland); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.10	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.171 Ensure that human rights defenders are protected from harassment, criminalisation and persecution, and adopt policy for the protection of human rights defenders (Slovenia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.205 Harmonise the national legal framework with international human rights standards to remedy inaccuracies that could restrict the fundamental freedoms and work of human rights defenders (Mexico); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.138 Fully respect democracy, including by ensuring the separation of powers, due process, respect for	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
human rights, and a safe and enabling environment for civil society groups (Australia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12		
31.169 Guarantee freedom of expression, and support a plural and safe communication environment (Slovakia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 3
31.184 Protect and promote freedom of expression, ensure the safety of journalists, and respond to alleged violations (Bulgaria); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.194 Guarantee freedom of expression (Georgia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 3
31.207 Take effective measures to ensure freedom of expression, free access to information and press freedom, including by guaranteeing independent investigations in all allegations of crimes against journalists (Netherlands); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 3
31.213 Enhance efforts to expand civic and democratic space, with a special focus on the protection of journalists, human rights defenders and political actors from intimidation and attacks (Republic of Korea); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.224 Adopt measures preventing reprisals against individuals and groups cooperating with international human rights mechanisms (Czechia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.73 Continue its efforts to promote and protect the human rights of its people by further strengthening coordination between relevant institutions and	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
expanding channels of communication with civil society (Thailand); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12		
31.228 Continue efforts aimed at facilitating sincere and open dialogue with all stakeholders and promoting national reconciliation, including at the local level (Holy See); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.10	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.238 Continue promoting and supporting the work of organizations and social movements (Plurinational State of Bolivia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.10	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.122 Take urgent measures to conduct exhaustive and impartial investigations on excessive use of force and ensure accountability for human rights violations committed by State actors (Croatia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.123 Duly investigate all allegations of excessive use of force by security forces, arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial executions, torture and other grave violations of human rights (Ukraine); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.124 Undertake independent, thorough and prompt investigations into all cases of human rights violations, particularly extrajudicial killings, attacks against journalists and human rights defenders, and bring perpetrators to justice (Austria); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.125 Immediately and impartially investigate all instances of extrajudicial killing and excessive use of force by security forces, including in the context of protests (Belgium); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.126 Strengthen capacities to conduct swift, exhaustive and impartial investigations into cases of	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 2 & 4

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and excessive use of force (Mexico); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12		
31.127 Ensure that judicial authorities conduct, in accordance with international law, prompt, independent and impartial investigations and prosecutions of extrajudicial executions, torture and arbitrary arrests conducted by the national police and security forces (Finland); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 2 & 4
31.197 Guarantee freedom of expression and opinion on- and off-line and access to justice for victims of these violations, and ensure that human rights defenders, journalists and humanitarian workers can operate in a safe environment (Italy); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 2 & 3
31.175 Provide an enabling democratic environment for activities of political opposition, journalists and human rights defenders (Ukraine); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.192 Create a safe non-discriminatory environment for the press, civil society and humanitarian organisations and ensure the safety of people working in these areas (Estonia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.200 Take measures to foster a safe, respectful and enabling environment for civil society and human rights defenders, especially women human rights defenders, free from persecution, intimidation and harassment (Latvia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.183 Expedite investigations and criminal proceedings on the remaining cases of deaths in the context of protests (Botswana); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
31.115 Strengthen national measures to combat criminal violence, especially as regards arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial executions, and the disproportionate use of force by civil and security forces (Holy See); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.199 Promote and protect the right to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and media freedom, as well as the safety of journalists (Latvia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 2, 3 & 4
31.203 Ensure respect for freedom of assembly, opinion, and expression for peaceful demonstrators or protesters (Lithuania); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.204 Ensure respect for freedom of assembly, opinion, and expression for individuals engaging in peaceful demonstrations, in accordance with the Constitution (Malta); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.208 Ensure respect for democratic rights such as freedom of assembly and expression, and full participation in electoral processes by all parties (New Zealand); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.211 Respect freedom of assembly, opinion, and expression for individuals engaging in peaceful demonstrations (Poland); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.232 Safeguard freedom of peaceful assembly and refrain from the use of excessive force against peaceful protestors (Republic of Korea); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.235 Undertake legal and administrative measures for addressing the recommendations made for ensuring the freedom of expression, opinion and association and of the press, the right to peaceful	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 1, 3 & 4

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
demonstration, the rights to food and education, as well as public access to health services and medicines (Romania); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12		
31.186 Ensure a free environment that enables the work of civil society organizations and adopt a policy for the protection of human rights defenders (Côte d'Ivoire); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.189 Establish a free and enabling environment for the work of civil society organizations and ensure that human rights defenders and civic activists are not persecuted, harassed or publicly stigmatized (Czechia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.12	Supported	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.170 Modify the Law against Hatred, for Peaceful Coexistence and Tolerance so that it cannot be used against journalists and human rights defenders (Slovakia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.178 Review the restrictive legislation that criminalizes the work of human rights defenders (Uruguay); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.180 Ensure media freedom by bringing national legislation into line with Venezuela's Constitution and international standards, and reinstate all media outlets that have unwarrantedly been closed (Austria); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 3
31.174 End the systematic repression of, and ensure the protection of, human rights defenders, including environmental defenders, by revising repressive legislation (Sweden); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
31.177 Take urgent measures to guarantee full respect for the rights to freedom of expression and of the press (Uruguay); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 3
31.118 Combat impunity for violations and crimes, including extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention and torture, by examining responsibility and ensuring accountability at the highest levels of the chain of command (Canada); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.14	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.128 Hold accountable all Venezuela operatives, agents, and members of security forces or armed groups who are responsible for human rights violations or abuses – including those such as the FAES involving unlawful killings, forced disappearances, torture, and other physical and sexual abuse – by initiating investigations into credible allegations in the next six months (United States of America); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.201 Conduct full and impartial investigations of all threats and attacks against and killings of journalists, civil society actors and human rights defenders, and hold the perpetrators accountable (Latvia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.202 Cease harassment and criminalisation of civil society organisations and independent media (Lithuania); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.191 Improve the situation of civil and political rights, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and annul restrictions to civic and democratic space (Estonia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.14	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.173 Ensure that State institutions are not used to persecute political opponents, journalists and other	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
media workers, union leaders and other perceived opponents of the Government (Sweden); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17		
31.181 Take all necessary measures to prevent acts of persecution and targeted repression, including based on political affiliation, and ensure that human rights defenders are protected without discrimination on any grounds (Bahamas); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.182 Refrain from attacks and arbitrary arrests of people, especially journalists, exercising their right to freedom of expression, and end impunity in the case of violations of this right (Belgium); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.223 Eradicate all forms of repression and persecution on political grounds (Chile); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.129 Immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners and conduct thorough and credible reforms of the police and judiciary, and in particular of the Special Action Forces (FAES) (Austria); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Partially implemented Source: Section 2
31.130 Release persons detained or arrested for political reasons and refrain from, and prevent, violence and retaliatory action (Australia); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Partially implemented Source: Section 2
31.131 Release all political prisoners immediately and unconditionally and take immediate steps to end arbitrary arrest and detention (United States of America); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Partially implemented Source: Section 2
31.172 Guarantee the cessation of acts of criminalisation, persecution and imprisonment of opponents, dissidents, human rights defenders and protesters, as well as guarantee their effective security and freedom, and offer reparation to victims (Spain);	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17		
31.193 Ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and guarantee the freedom and security of all political opponents (France); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Partially implemented Source: Section 2
31.212 Continue to release political prisoners and create an enabling environment for political opposition, human rights defenders and journalists (Portugal); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Partially implemented Source: Sections 1 & 2
31.117 Eliminate the excessive use of force as a policy to repress peaceful demonstrations (Israel); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 4
31.176 End immediately all undue interference with freedoms of expression, religion, association, and peaceful assembly. Allow all independent media, religious institutions, civil society organisations, and humanitarian organisations to operate without undue restrictions or threats (United States of America); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 1
31.185 Cease all harassment, criminalisation and persecution against journalists, human rights defenders and civil society organisations, guaranteeing a safe and enabling environment for their work (Canada); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.187 Fully respect freedom of expression and halt and prevent all acts of repression against members of the democratic opposition and civil society (Denmark); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 2 & 3
31.188 Put an end to the persecution and criminalisation of human rights defenders, humanitarian workers, journalists and civil society activists (Costa Rica);	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2

Recommendation	Position	Assessment/Comments on level of implementation
Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17		
31.190 Cease acts of persecution and intimidation against dissenting voices and political opposition, and guarantee the effective exercise of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, and of peaceful assembly and association (Ecuador); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 1, 2 & 3
31.206 Take appropriate action and measures to guarantee a safe working environment for civil society, including human rights defenders, civil society organisations, educators, and health-care and humanitarian aid workers, free from fear of threats, reprisals, persecution and arbitrary imprisonment and unwarranted limitations to freedom of association (Netherlands); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Sections 1 & 2
31.210 Guarantee that NGOs, journalists, trade unionists and human rights defenders can carry out their work without risk of persecution, and remove the legal requirement for NGOs to register with the National Office Against Organised Crime (Norway); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.14	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.216 Cease the repression of independent Venezuelan civil society (New Zealand); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2
31.221 Revoke legal or administrative regulations that threaten the functioning of civil society organisations, such as Administrative Decision 002-2011, and refrain from issuing new ones (Switzerland); Source of Position: A/HRC/50/8/Add.1 - Para.17	Noted	Status: Not implemented Source: Section 2