

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PUBLIC STATEMENT

AI Index: AMR 53/002/2012
19 March 2012

Venezuela: Amnesty International welcomes the commitment to support human rights defenders, but regrets the rejection of recommendations to formulate a National Human Rights Plan

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Venezuela

Amnesty International welcomes Venezuela's support of recommendations on human rights defenders, and its commitment to support their activities and to publicly recognise their role.¹ In this regard, the organization urges Venezuela to engage in an open, meaningful dialogue with all civil society actors, representing a wide scope of views.

Amnesty International regrets that Venezuela decided to reject recommendations to formulate a National Human Rights Plan² and to issue standing invitations to regional and international human rights mechanisms and bodies.³ The organization urges Venezuela to revisit this decision without delay.

Amnesty International also regrets Venezuela's rejection of recommendations made by eleven States on the justice system,⁴ including around the independence of the judiciary,⁵ the appointment of judges⁶ and non-interference by the executive branch.⁷ In this context, Amnesty International reiterates our call for the release of Judge María Lourdes Afiuni, who remains under house arrest.

Finally, Amnesty International welcomes Venezuela's acceptance of recommendations on the training of its police force,⁸ and urges Venezuela to implement these recommendations immediately, in a manner that ensures that torture, ill-treatment, unlawful killings and excessive use of force will not be tolerated.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Venezuela on 15 March during its 19th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on Venezuela: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/007/2011/en>

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¹ A/HRC/19/12, recommendations 93.16 (Canada) and 93.17 (Brazil).

² Ibid., recommendation 95.7 (Brazil).

³ Ibid., recommendations 95.8 (Uruguay), 95.9 (UK), 95.10 (Norway), 95.11 (Brazil), 95.12 (Australia) and 95.13 (USA).

⁴ Ibid., recommendations 95.6 (Belgium), 96.1 (Slovenia), 96.13 (USA), 96.14 (Canada), 96.15 (Switzerland), 96.16 (UK), 96.17 (Australia), 96.18 (Germany), 96.19 (France), 96.20 (Slovakia), 96.21 (Israel) and 96.22 (USA).

⁵ Ibid., recommendations 96.13 (USA), 96.14 (Canada), 96.15 (Switzerland), 96.18 (Germany), 96.19 (France) and 96.20 (Slovakia).

⁶ Ibid., recommendations 96.16 (UK), 96.17 (Australia) and 96.18 (Germany).

⁷ Ibid., recommendations 96.21 (Israel) and 96.22 (USA).

⁸ Ibid., recommendations 94.30 (Cuba) and 94.34 (Malaysia).