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## ORAL STATEMENT

Item 4: Interactive dialogue on the report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

### **CONTINUED USE OF POLITICALLY MOTIVATED ARBITRARY DETENTIONS REINFORCE THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL SCRUTINY**

UN Human Rights Council  
Fifty fourth session  
11 September – 13 October 2023

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the Fact-Finding Mission's report. Continued scrutiny by the FFM and this Council is an invaluable support to Venezuelan victims, survivors and civil society's fight for truth and justice in Venezuela.

The government's policy of repression to control its population and silence dissent remains unchanged. Threats to civil society continue, in the form of criminalization, regressive legislative measures, and stigmatization. In a recent report, Amnesty International revealed how the use of politically motivated arbitrary detention targets a diverse range of people, regardless of their political engagement; from teachers to trade unionists, from human rights defenders to journalists. Prisoner of conscience Javier Tarazona remains detained since 2021. We demand his unconditional and immediate release, and that of all those arbitrarily detained for political reasons, including Guillermo Zárraga, Emirlendris Benítez, and university student John Álvarez, who was unfairly detained under a month ago.

We reiterate our call for an immediate end to the use of arbitrary detentions. We urge member states of this Council to offer unequivocal support to Venezuelan civil society, who face ever growing restrictions to their defence of human rights.

Venezuela must provide unhindered access to the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, as well as other Special Procedure mandates, and cooperate with international scrutiny and justice mechanisms.

Thank you.