

## **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT**

29 June 2015

Index: AMR 53/1942/2015

### **HUMAN RIGHTS IN VENEZUELA BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

Today, Venezuela will appear before the UN Human Rights Committee, which will review its compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The signatories to this public statement are all organizations that have submitted information to the Committee showing that, despite some progress in reforming the law, Venezuela has not fulfilled its obligation to protect civil and political rights and that grave human rights violations continue to be committed.

There are persistent reports of extrajudicial executions, excessive use of force, torture and other ill-treatment and arbitrary detentions. Journalists, human rights defenders and critics of the government continue to be attacked and harassed.

Prison conditions violate the human rights of those deprived of their liberty. The state has also failed to protect the human rights of certain sections of society – such as children and adolescents, women, LGBTI people and Indigenous Peoples – who continue to face discrimination.

The justice system is inefficient and continues to suffer from a lack of independence and impartiality. As a result, the vast majority of human rights violations remain unpunished, depriving victims, who often face ongoing harassment of their right to truth and justice, and adequate reparation.

In this context, the increasing climate of harassment and intimidation, which is encouraged at the very highest levels of government, faced by human rights defenders is particularly worrying.

When Venezuela appeared before the Committee against Torture in November 2014, it promised that human rights defenders who provided information to the Committee would not suffer reprisals. Despite this, attacks against human rights defenders who take part in regional and international forums to report human rights violations continue to rise. The Special Rapporteurs on human rights defenders at the United Nations and from the Inter-American system of human rights have raised serious concerns about these attacks.

The reports of grave human rights violations that have been documented, entrenched impunity and the undermining of the institutions responsible for upholding the rule of law, as well as Venezuela's denunciation of the American Convention on Human Rights and its failure to comply with the recommendations of regional and international human rights bodies, together with the attacks on those who question the actions of the authorities, including human rights defenders, clearly call into question Venezuela's commitment, as party to human rights treaties, to promoting and protecting the human rights of all, without discrimination,.

All the organizations who are signatories to this statement urge Venezuela to fulfil this commitment to guarantee human rights by engaging in an open and constructive dialogue with international and regional human rights bodies, and welcoming their scrutiny and by implementing their recommendations to address the grave human rights issues that the

country faces.

It is vital that the government show its respect for freedom of expression and acknowledge criticisms and dissenting opinions both at home and abroad, with a view to improving the protection and promotion of everyone's human rights, without discrimination.

The signatories to this statement urge the Human Rights Committee to address these grave concerns in their review of Venezuela.



Amnesty International

AVESA (Venezuelan Association for an Alternative Sexual Education)



CEJIL (Center for Justice and International Law)



Centre for Peace and Human Rights, Central University of Venezuela



CEPAZ (Centre for Justice, Support and Peace)



Civilis Human Rights



Coalición Proceso



COFAVIC (Coalition of Families and Victims)



Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Zulia

Comisión Internacional de Juristas



Espacio Público



FREYA (Hispano-American Centre for Women)



Foro Penal Venezolano



Foro por la Vida



Fundación Reflejos



GENDHU (Gender, Democracies and Human Rights)



International Association of Judges – Grupo Iberoamericano



International Bar Association Human Rights Institute



Instituto Prensa y Sociedad



Human Rights Watch



Laboratorio de Paz



Observatorio Venezolano de Prisiones



Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia



OMCT (World Organization against Torture)



PROVEA (Venezuelan Human Rights Education and Action Program)



REDHNNNA (Network for the human Rights of Children and Adolescents)



Red LGBTI de Venezuela



Sinergia (Venezuelan Network of Civil Society Organizations)



Vicaría de derechos humanos de Caracas



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The organizations that signed this statement have submitted the following reports to the UN Human Rights Committee for its examination of Venezuela:

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

*Venezuela Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Committee 114th Session, 29 June - 24 July 2015*, available at

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr53/1769/2015/en/>

**CEPAZ/GENDHU/AVESA/FREYA**

*Political Persecution in Venezuela*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20686\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20686_E.pdf)

**OMCT AND VENEZUELAN NGOS**

*Informe alternativo al cuarto Informe periódico de República Bolivariana de Venezuela sobre el cumplimiento del Pacto Internacional de los Derechos Civiles y Políticos al Comité de Derechos Humanos de la Organización de Naciones Unidas*

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCCPR%2fCSS%2fVEN%2f20704&Lang=en](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCCPR%2fCSS%2fVEN%2f20704&Lang=en)

**ESPACIO PÚBLICO**

*Alternative report on implementation of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Reply to List of Issues - CCPR/C/VEN/Q/4)*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20711\\_S.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20711_S.pdf)

**VENEZUELAN PENAL FORUM**

*Venezuela: List of Issues for the Consideration Of the Human Rights Committee United Nations*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20238\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20238_E.pdf)

**FORO POR LA VIDA**

*Venezuela: Alternative report on implementation of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Reply to List of Issues - CCPR/C/VEN/Q/4)*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20595\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20595_E.pdf)

**LABORATORIO DE PAZ**

*Derechos Civiles y Políticos de los Pueblos Indígenas*

**OBSERVATORIO VENEZOLANO DE PRISIONES**

*Informe sobre la situación de privados de libertad en Venezuela con motivo de la revisión del cuarto informe de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela ante el Comité de Derechos Humanos de la ONU 114º periodo de sesiones 29 de junio al 24 de julio de 2015*

**LGBTI NETWORK OF VENEZUELA**

*Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex persons in Venezuela*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20596\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20596_E.pdf)

**REDHNNNA**

*Alternative Report to the Human Rights Committee United Nations on the Situation of Civil and Political Rights of Children and Youth in Venezuela*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20710\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20710_E.pdf)

**SINERGIA/CIVILIS**

*Alternative report on Articles 20, 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_VEN\\_20719\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/VEN/INT_CCPR_CSS_VEN_20719_E.pdf)

**ICJ/IBAHRI/IAJ**

<http://icj.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Venezuela-ICJ-IBAHRI-IAJ-Informe-Alternativo-Advocacy-legal-submission-2015-SPA.pdf>