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ORAL STATEMENT

Item 4: Interactive dialogue on the report of the High Commissioner on her report on the human rights situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (HRC res. 45/20)

INTERNATIONAL SCRUTINY AND THE PROTECTION AND INCLUSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ARE CRUCIAL TO ADDRESSING THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN VENEZUELA

UN Human Rights Council
Forty-seventh session
21 June – 13 July 2021

Madame President,

Amnesty International thanks the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for her report on the human rights situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, including an assessment on the implementation of her recommendations to the government of Venezuela.

It is deeply disappointing that despite repeated recommendations by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela, human rights violations that have been repeatedly reported to this Council, some of which may amount to crimes against humanity,¹ continue unabated in Venezuela. The Special Action Forces (FAES) of the Bolivarian National Police remain active despite the High Commissioner's recommendation of dissolution, politically motivated arbitrary [detentions and prosecutions persist](#), and human rights defenders continue to face an [asphyxiating environment](#). Recent announcements of reforms by the Government, including on arbitrary detentions and judicial reform, are not credible when led by alleged perpetrators, and do not fundamentally change the policy of repression.

Despite various commitments made, including to this Council,² the Government has also continued to bar access to relevant Special Procedures³ and the Fact-Finding Mission.

¹ Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela, *Detailed findings of the independent international Fact-Finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*, 15 September 2021, UN Doc. A/HRC/45/CRP.11, paragraphs 2086 -2094.

² UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Report: *Human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*, 5 July 2019, A/HRC/41/18, para. 5.

³ UN Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, View Country visits of Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council since 1998, spinternet.ohchr.org/ViewCountryVisits.aspx?visitType=all&lang=en, (accessed on 30 June 2021), "Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

We urge Venezuelan authorities to take long-overdue, concrete measures, which this Council should continue to press for, to end the policy of repression; to allow human rights defenders to carry out their work without fear of reprisal; and to allow full and unfettered access to independent human rights monitors, including relevant Special Procedures and the Fact-Finding Mission. In light of the [findings of our organisation](#) and other independent monitors, we specifically urge Venezuelan authorities to facilitate country visits by the Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial executions and on torture and other ill-treatment and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, without further delay.

Robust international monitoring and reporting on the situation on the ground remains a vital tool for deterrence and accountability, and we urge this Council to continue and further bolster their efforts in this regard. The UN and its member states must also redouble efforts to protect and promote a safe and enabling environment for Venezuelan civil society. All efforts to address the ongoing human rights crisis must be based on full and meaningful consultation with, and inclusion and protection of, Venezuelan civil society, including the human rights defenders who bravely continue their work at significant personal risk.

Thank you.