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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

Summary

Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 57/36, this report focuses on the latest developments related to rule of law, accountability, civic space and economic, social and cultural rights and the right to a healthy environment, as well as the implementation of previous recommendations to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

I. Introduction and methodology

1. This report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 57/36, in which the Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (the High Commissioner) to submit a comprehensive report on the situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (Venezuela), containing a detailed assessment of the implementation of the recommendations made in previous reports, and to present it to the Council at its sixty-second session.
2. The present report covers the period from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026, and it focuses on the latest developments related to rule of law, civic space, economic, social and cultural rights, the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The report is based on information gathered and analysed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), including through interviews with victims and witnesses and civil society organizations. In this period, OHCHR budget reduced significantly, including due to the liquidity-related crisis affecting the regular budget of the UN Secretariat, resulting in reduced capacity for the implementation of OHCHR mandate in relation to Venezuela.
3. The findings in the present report are based on the analysis of the information gathered and corroborated in compliance with OHCHR methodology.¹
4. On 3 January 2026, the United States conducted a military operation in Venezuela that led to the seizure of its President and his spouse and their removal to the United States, where they remain in pre-trial detention. The High Commissioner stated that such operation undermined the fundamental principle of international law by which States must not use force to pursue their territorial claims or political demands.² On 8 January 2026, the President of the National Assembly announced releases, noting that it was for national unity, the consolidation of peace, and harmonious coexistence.³ On 26 January 2026, the Government of Venezuela requested that OHCHR verify lists of released prisoners. OHCHR conducted two missions to Venezuela but could not verify these figures, as it did not receive the requested list of released individuals or access to detention centres.
5. Since then, Venezuelan authorities have gradually resumed their cooperation with OHCHR. The OHCHR team has returned to the country, with initial interactions with authorities underway. OHCHR stands ready to provide tailored technical assistance and to progressively expand its in-country presence to discharge its full mandate, including to strengthen the human rights capacity of State institutions and support dialogue initiatives.

II. Rule of Law and Accountability

6. During this reporting period, OHCHR confirmed the release of 1,149 persons, many of which under conditions, who had been arbitrarily detained (947 men, 197 women and five adolescents). These included releases carried out on 25 December 2025, 1 January 2026, and following the announcement of 8 January 2026. Most of those released had been detained in the period that followed the 28 July 2024 presidential elections, or the 10 January 2025 presidential inauguration. Among the releases, 74 were foreign citizens, and 40 were dual citizens.
7. Public statements by high authorities, including following recent releases, contributed to stigmatizing persons deprived of liberty as “terrorists”⁴ or persons who promoted violence

¹ See A/HRC/59/58, para. 3.

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2026/01/high-commissioners-op-ed-us-military-action-venezuela-makes-every>.

³ <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/noticias/diputado-jorge-rodriguez-anuncia-excarcelacion-de-importante-grupo-de-venezolanos-y-extranjeros>.

⁴ <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DTiiTWWmHfn/>.

and division.⁵ This rhetoric raises concerns of revictimization of detainees and their families, who already bear the multidimensional consequences of these detentions.

8. On 19 February, the National Assembly unanimously adopted an Amnesty Law for Democratic Coexistence (amnesty law).⁶ The law applies to individuals convicted or prosecuted for acts or omissions that constitute offences committed between 1 January 1999 and 19 February 2026 related to a limited set of events set out in the law. Its adoption followed a six-day consultation period which, although conducted, was too limited to ensure transparency or sufficiently broad and meaningful participation across society, in line with international standards. The formulation of the law raises concerns *inter alia* regarding its scope, as it does not appear to fully cover a number of cases of individuals who have been arbitrarily detained. The law further provides for the destruction of related evidence, creating serious concerns that valuable information, including possible human rights violations, may be eliminated, thereby undermining accountability and truth-seeking processes.

9. By April 2026 the Government stated that over 8,000 persons had benefitted from the law, including 314 persons released from detention, as well as those whose precautionary measures and alternative forms of detention were lifted, as most releases conducted prior were subject to precautionary measures, such as court presentations or prohibitions to leave the country.

10. Civil society actors, relatives and former detainees have reported instances suggesting the arbitrary implementation of the law, including the rejection of cases by judicial authorities, despite meeting requirements stipulated in the law. Civil society, victims' associations and political parties reported inconsistent tallies and a lack of clear and objective criteria and transparency in the process, worsening psycho-social harm for victims and their families.

11. Despite the large-scale releases, civil society reports that between 662 and 700 persons remain arbitrarily detained for political reasons, at least 24 are foreign nationals, 88 are women.

12. The releases were not accompanied by the return of property, such as telephones or motorbikes confiscated during detention. OHCHR also documented the arbitrary confiscation of the homes of at least four detained persons.

13. The ICC Office of the Prosecutor (OtP) investigation into alleged crimes against humanity committed in the country since at least 2014 remains ongoing (Venezuela I) and is being taken forward through extensive engagement with victims, affected communities and relevant civil society partners. On 1 December 2025, the ICC Office of the Prosecutor (OtP) announced that real progress on complementarity had remained a challenge and that, mindful of the need to manage limited resources, it had decided to close its in-country office in Caracas.⁷ On 11 December 2025, the National Assembly approved a law to repealed the domestic law ratifying the Rome Statute, and sent it to the Presidency of the Republic for its consideration; the new law has not been enacted.⁸ On 12 March, the OtP determined that there was not reasonable basis to believe that crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court had been committed through the imposition of certain sanctions by the United States on Venezuela, and therefore no reasonable basis to initiate an investigation into that situation.⁹

A. Detention and the right to personal integrity

14. During the reporting period, at least 158 men and 25 women deprived of liberty, who were originally subjected to enforced disappearance, were able to receive visits, delivery of

⁵ Jorge Rodríguez y Luis Florido en la Asamblea Nacional sobre presos liberados, 13 enero 2026 (min 2:33 to 3:04).

⁶ Gaceta Oficial No. 6.990 Extraordinaria.

⁷ https://asp.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/asp_docs/ASP24-STMT-DPROS-FLOOR.pdf.

⁸ <https://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/noticias/an-sanciona-derogatoria-de-ley-aprobatoria-del-estatuto-de-roma-de-la-cpi>.

⁹ ICC Office of the Prosecutor concludes preliminary examinations into Venezuela II and Lithuania/Belarus | International Criminal Court.

food or medicine, and were able to communicate with families. OHCHR remains concerned of the ongoing enforced disappearances of Hugo Enrique Marino Salas, Lieutenant Colonel Juan Antonio Hurtado Campos and Nelson Alexis Giménez Canelón.¹⁰

15. In addition, OHCHR documented 45 transfers of detainees that led to their enforced disappearance, as no formal notification was made to legal representatives or families and their whereabouts became unknown. OHCHR received accounts of other violations linked to the detainee transfers, including collective punishments, ill-treatment and torture.

16. Most enforced disappearances and incommunicado detentions during the reporting period occurred in Rodeo I Maximum Security Centre and the Fuerte Guaicaipuro Military Detention Centre, both in Miranda state. Unofficial reports indicate that the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence manages these centres, despite their formal oversight by the Ministry of Penitentiary Services.

17. OHCHR received information of the resumption of visits to detainees in many facilities across the country as of January 2026, marking an improvement towards the conditions of persons deprived of liberty. Detainees and their relatives continued to report overcrowding, insufficient food, water for both drinking and hygiene needs, and lack of medical attention. These conditions contributed to the deterioration of detainees' health. OHCHR also received reports of inmates' suicide attempts.

18. At least 16 alleged deaths in custody were reported, including from unattended medical conditions and for which no investigation has been reported to date. Investigations were announced regarding an incident that took place on the night of 19 to 20 April 2026 in Yare III, Miranda state which resulted in the death of five detainees according to official sources. While authorities described a mutiny, relatives and civil society are concerned that the deaths resulted from disproportionate use of force by custodians, amid reports of deteriorating prison conditions and mistreatment.

19. The death of Víctor Hugo Quero on 24 July 2025, whose whereabouts had been unknown since January 2025, was only publicly disclosed, and informed to the family, by the Ministry of Penitentiary Services on 7 May 2026.

20. According to information received, foreign citizens of at least 20 different nationalities who had been arbitrarily detained in Venezuela were not granted access to consular assistance. Consular visits were also limited and monitored by guards.

21. OHCHR documented the cases of 35 persons detained with critical health conditions, some linked to detention conditions, denial or lack of medical care, torture or ill-treatment. Among these, four were persons over the age of 70. OHCHR observed that detention conditions, including availability of healthcare, medicine, medical diagnosis, as well as nutritional needs were not adequate for all prison population.

22. OHCHR received allegations of torture and ill-treatment in detention in 21 cases that took place in this reporting period. Victims described collective punishment in retaliation for families' denunciations of detention conditions, as well as individual corporal and psychological punishment, including asphyxiation, beatings; forced nudity and electric shocks to the genitals; deprivation of natural light; deliberate denial of medical assistance and solitary confinement.

23. Individuals from low-income households, particularly women, are disproportionately affected, as the detention of a relative, often the primary income earner, results in loss of essential household income. Women are often compelled to sustain the household while covering additional detention-related costs, including transport and basic items.

24. Female relatives of detainees, including at least one adolescent girl, reported humiliating and degrading treatment during the body search conducted by a female guard prior to the visit of the detainees. Degrading treatment included invasive body searches, forced nudity, and extortion.

¹⁰ A/HRC/56/63 para 76.

B. Access to Justice

25. On 30 January 2026, the Government announced the conversion of the Maximum-Security Detention Centre AMC-1, known as the Helicoide, into a social and cultural centre to promote “national reconciliation.” Civil society actors and victims have warned that this conversion risks erasing collective memory and evidence of human rights violations and called for comprehensive reforms to guarantee the rights to truth, justice, reparation and non-recurrence.

26. To date, authorities have not opened investigations into possible human rights violations perpetrated by Bolivarian National Armed Forces in the context of the 2024 Operation Zaraza. These included allegations of deaths of 30 persons, maiming, arbitrary detentions, and the destruction of livelihoods and civilian infrastructure in the states of Miranda and nearby areas. According to sources, mistrust in institutions and fear of reprisals have discouraged victims from filing official complaints.

27. OHCHR documented five cases of arbitrary deprivation of life by agents of Venezuelan security forces, including in the context of security operations against criminal organizations and narco-trafficking groups, comprising three men killed in raids into their homes. The victims were mostly young men from low-income backgrounds. Concerns were reported in relation to the lack of a thorough investigation, including that autopsies were either not conducted or did not classify the deaths as homicides, despite clear bullet wounds.

28. In July 2025, eight police officers were sentenced to maximum penalties for qualified homicide, concealment, and illegal use of official weapons in connection with the 2018 killing of two adolescents; one officer was also convicted of torture. While this marks progress in combating impunity, the verdict has yet to be published, and challenges to accountability for deaths during security operations persist. In a separate case concerning a 2017 killing, on 23 March 2026 the Supreme Court ordered the annulment of a trial that had acquitted three members of the now-disbanded Special Action Forces, citing inconsistencies and contradictions in the appellate judgment and ordering a new trial, offering renewed hope to the victim’s family. No progress has been reported in other previously documented cases.

29. Despite prior recommendations, no progress was reported regarding the investigations of deaths in protest, including those that occurred in 2014, 2017, 2019 and 2024. Sources have reported intimidations from judicial authorities for demanding accountability, exacerbating challenges in their requests for justice and reparation.

C. Administration of Justice and due process

30. Challenges to due process continued to be observed during this reporting period, including denial of access to lawyers of their choosing, of access to files and arbitrary rejection of habeas corpus. OHCHR was informed of the continued use of virtual hearings, particularly conducted by the Specialized Court for Terrorism, in Caracas. These hearings have been characterized by limited participation of the accused and impeded communication with legal counsel.

31. On 6 April 2026, the Appeals Court accepted a constitutional protection action challenging the judgment in the Paramacay case, following the conviction on 19 December 2025 of 23 men, including former members of the Bolivarian National Guard and a trade unionist, who were sentenced to 30 years’ imprisonment for their alleged involvement in a 2017 plan to attack a military base in Carabobo state. The judgment was issued after the dismissal of over half of the evidence and after the court instructed the parties to present their conclusions without prior notification, raising concerns regarding respect for due process. At least ten detainees in the case were reportedly subjected to ill-treatment and torture during their detention. The case raises concerns regarding fair trial guarantees, including the right to adequate time and facilities to prepare a defense and the exclusion of evidence obtained under torture.

32. On 1 October 2025, Venezuela's Supreme Court¹¹ issued new regulations to organize the entry, promotion, and removal of non-tenured judges. The framework lacks competitive examinations based on objective criteria for appointing tenured judges and adequate safeguards, thereby undermining judicial independence. As of April 2026, the government announced a judicial reform, and the National Assembly on 21 April initiated the process for the designation of new magistrates for the Supreme Court. The process has prompted scrutiny from civil-society actors concerned with transparency, continuity, and judicial independence.

33. In April 2026, the National Assembly appointed a new Attorney General. The UN Special Rapporteurs on Independence of Judges and Lawyers and on Human Rights Defenders¹² and civil society organizations have raised concerns over the lack of transparency and the limited diversity of the National Assembly committee selecting the candidates, noting the absence of civil society and academic representation, which could undermine the impartiality of the selection.¹³

III. Civic and Democratic Space

34. OHCHR observed an increase in protests across Venezuela during the reporting period. One civil society organization registered 599 protests nationwide in February 2026, against 170 in that same period the previous year.¹⁴ The protests included calls for the release of arbitrarily detained persons, higher salaries and improved working conditions, the exercise of human rights and protection of Indigenous' territories. No major incidents were reported; however, a strong security presence reportedly restricted their full exercise and, in some cases, perceived as intimidation to protesters, unionists, journalists and human rights defenders.

35. Mobilizations of relatives of persons arbitrarily detained were observed across the country, primarily led by women, calling for the release of their loved ones, or to denounce the conditions of detention. Linked to these mobilizations, OHCHR received allegations and reports of harassment, stigmatization, and threats by State security forces made against the protestors, including one enforced disappearance which lasted two days following a detention which occurred in front of the United Nations Offices in Caracas.

36. OHCHR documented the arbitrary detention of 40 persons, seven women, that were members or leaders of opposition parties, human rights defenders, journalists, unionists, humanitarians and other voices deemed dissenting. In 25 of these cases, victims forcibly disappeared for periods from three to 180 days. The majority of these have been released following the announcement of 8 January 2026. However, of these, at least eight still face criminal proceedings and are subject to precautionary measures.

37. OHCHR observed repeated cases of harassment, stigmatization and detention by State security forces of relatives of voices deemed of dissent, detainees, and other victims' organizations, including 14 women, six seniors, and one minor, as young as 16-year-old. OHCHR is aware of at least eight who remain in detention.

38. The Government declared a state of emergency effective 3 January 2026 through the so-called Decree on External Commotion. The decree authorized restrictions on freedom of movement, property seizures for national defense, the suspension of assembly and protest rights, and the detention of individuals accused of supporting or promoting United States military operation. OHCHR received reports of security forces checkpoints conducting searches of private belongings and mobile phones for content critical of the government or perceived as supporting the United States, leading to reports of extortion and a pervasive

¹¹ http://historico.tsj.gob.ve/informacion/resoluciones/sp/resolucionSP_0003987.html.

¹² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/03/venezuela-appointments-attorney-general-and-ombudsperson-must-be-merit-based>.

¹³ Provea: proceso de elección del fiscal General y defensor del Pueblo incumple la ley.

¹⁴ <https://www.observatoriodeconflictos.org.ve/destacado/conflictividad-social-en-venezuela-en-febrero-de-2026>.

climate of fear. No official announcement was made regarding the lifting or extension of the decree beyond the stipulated 90-day period.

39. Amid geopolitical tensions, Venezuelan authorities also encouraged citizen denunciation of perceived threat and suspicious behaviour through a mobile application, which had been previously used during the unrest that followed the post-electoral protests of July 2024.¹⁵ This contributed to a climate of fear within the general population and self-censorship.

40. OHCHR has documented the arbitrary blocking of at least 85 websites by public and private internet service providers. These blocks include 39 media outlets, one social media platform, 27 online privacy services, and multimedia content distribution services, among others, restricting access to information and limiting freedom of expression. OHCHR also received concerns from users regarding digital surveillance by the Venezuelan Security and Intelligence actors.

41. On 1 March 2026, a journalist was found dead in Merida state. The authorities stated that the police's investigation concluded that his killing was not politically motivated and identified the alleged perpetrators, who had been arrested.¹⁶ However, the victim's family has expressed concerns over the investigation's opacity and partiality, urging that his journalistic activity is not excluded as a motive.

42. Between May and June 2025, OHCHR received allegations of detentions of at least nine economists and other individuals who had published economic data on their media platforms, contrary to a range of human rights, including freedom of opinion and expression.¹⁷ Following this detention, there was a sharp decline in the publication of economic indicators by private actors. Official data on labour, banking, debt, fiscal indicators, and oil revenues remain limited.

43. In March 2026, authorities referred to need to revise the Constitutional Law against Hatred, for Peaceful Coexistence and Tolerance.¹⁸ OHCHR had previously noted that the law contains provisions that unduly restrict the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to participate in public affairs and are inconsistent with international human rights law. OHCHR documented at least 60 cases of arbitrary detention in which individuals were charged with incitement to hatred.

44. Since its entry into force in November 2024, the Law on the Oversight, Regularization, Operation, and Financing of NGOs (NGO Law) had posed a significant obstacle to the functioning of civil society. Despite registering within the deadlines set by law, most organizations remain without an official response.

45. The Superintendency of Banking Institutions of Venezuela continued to impose disproportionate requirements on non-governmental organizations compared with other private entities. Banks and telecommunications companies cited the NGO law to request documentation that is either not required under the law or does not exist. Some organizations were also asked to provide confidential information, including lists of beneficiaries. Others reported being unable to comply with these demands and noted that, in some cases, such requests interfered with their operations.

46. The July 2025 regional, legislative and municipal elections occurred without major incidents. OHCHR however observed persisting undue restrictions on freedom of opinion and expression and the right to participate in public affairs in the months preceding the ballot, as well as arbitrary detentions of opposition members, their staff, human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists. Authorities also made public calls for community surveillance that contributed to a chilling effect.

47. Following the 2025 legislative elections, women occupy close to 50 per cent of seats in the National Assembly. Concerns persist regarding structural barriers affecting the full and

¹⁵ A/HRC/59/141 para 41.

¹⁶ <https://www.mppriip.gob.ve/prensa/reporte/vicepresidente-sectorial-diosdado-cabello-anuncia-esclarecimiento-del-caso-del-periodista-walter-jaimes>.

¹⁷ ICCPR article 19.

¹⁸ <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DVbFeD5DS7A/>.

equal participation of women across decision-making processes, particularly at the subnational level, and the absence of safeguards to ensure the effective enjoyment of the right to participate in public affairs on an equal basis. OHCHR documented shortcomings in the election of Indigenous representatives, including limited access to information for communities, restrictions on eligibility for delegate candidates, and allegations of coercion, raising concerns regarding the ability of Indigenous Peoples to participate freely and effectively in electoral processes. These issues echo longstanding concerns about the regulatory framework governing Indigenous Representatives' elections and its compatibility with international human rights standards.¹⁹

48. At least seven political parties, in cases documented by OHCHR, remained subject to some form of judicial intervention by the Supreme Court of Justice, or other arbitrary administrative obstacles. These interventions result in party leadership being controlled by individuals who lack the support of most members, preventing members from exercising their rights to freedom of association, and participating in public affairs.

49. OHCHR documented four cases of public sector workers dismissed following the 2024 presidential elections without formal notification, explanation, or compensation, allegedly due to their real or perceived views of the electoral results; three remain pending before the Labour Inspectorate and one is under appeal after a first instance ruling. OHCHR also received additional allegations of denied retirement and arbitrary salary suspensions within the public sector.

IV. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

50. During the reporting period, Venezuela's economic landscape was marked by a sustained erosion of purchasing power and reports of increasing constraints on living standards. Revenues from oil and gold exports are being channeled through internationally supervised mechanisms. In parallel, reduced funding for humanitarian non-governmental and international organizations led to a scaling back of essential assistance, exacerbating social pressures. Despite some easing of general licenses, sector-specific sanctions and persistent over-compliance continued to constrain financial flows and supply chains, in amid accelerating inflation and significant depreciation of national currency, further undermining the enjoyment of human rights, primarily social, economic and cultural rights.

51. There was a resumption of foreign investment and of exports. The creation of two sovereign funds was announced in January 2026. These steps may facilitate measures to address challenges to improve the living conditions in Venezuela. The digital platform established by the authorities to enhance transparency in the administration of funds remains limited in scope, with scarce updates.

52. OHCHR received information about increased deportations of Venezuelans abroad, including 40 flights from the United States carrying over 7,000 persons between May 2025 and April 2026, alongside rising spontaneous returns, while information on reintegration and related protection risks in Venezuela remains scarce.

53. On 30 April 2026, the authorities announced an increase in the "Economic War Bonus" to USD 200, while the food voucher remained at USD 40. As this transfer even when combined with the minimum wage remains insufficient to meet basic needs, gaps in income security persist. Further it does not count toward social security contributions and future pension. Pensioners and retired public administration workers receive bonuses of USD 70 and USD 168, respectively. In this context, OHCHR received reports indicating that, in the absence of adequate pension and social protection, many older persons continue to work beyond retirement age, predominantly in the informal sector.²⁰

54. Between 28 and 29 April 2026, the fifth Social Dialogue Forum was held between employers, workers' organizations and the Government, with ILO participation, to follow up

¹⁹ CERD/C/VEN/CO/22-24 para 26 -27.

²⁰ <https://conviteac.org/publicaciones/investigaciones/assessment-of-the-living-and-health-conditions-of-older-people-in-venezuela-2025/>.

on agreements concerning the Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention (No. 26); the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention (No. 87) and the Tripartite Consultation Convention (No. 144). The fifth session was organized following reiterated calls by the ILO Governing Body to convene the Forum, enable ILO technical assistance, and advance implementation of obligations arising out of the three Conventions.²¹

A. Right to health

55. On 7 April 2026 the authorities announced to restore sanitation and electrical infrastructure of certain hospitals, starting in the capital.²² The resumption in March 2026 of the weekly epidemiological bulletin, after nine years of interruption, with the support of PAHO/WHO,²³ is also a positive step. The bulletin includes data on six diseases; however, key health conditions subject to mandatory reporting, including tuberculosis, dengue, HIV/AIDS, diphtheria, maternal and child mortality, are not reflected, and available data remain minimally disaggregated.

56. The Dialysis and Nephrology Programme's central warehouse, located near a military target in La Guaira, was reportedly damaged following the 3 January 2026. It reportedly contained three months' worth of dialysis supplies for 127 units across the country, intended for 8,000 renal patients, including over 500 children. Venezuelan authorities,²⁴ in coordination with UN agencies, the PAHO/WHO and Brazil, activated a response programme that included the shipment of at least 230 tons of medical supplies. On 12 January 2026, regular dialysis schedule resumed. However, structural challenges persisted particularly outside Capital District, as many dialysis units faced frequent power and water outages.

57. OHCHR received information indicating that while existing licensing frameworks authorize the export of medicines and medical devices, financial restrictions and instances of bank overcompliance continued to pose significant obstacles to procurement, including delays in vaccine acquisition and additional administrative requirements associated with humanitarian waivers. Concerns were raised regarding the limited availability of essential HIV/AIDS treatments and malaria diagnostic tests, linked to procurement constraints and the imposition of price premiums by certain providers.

58. Venezuela continued to benefit from support provided by the Global Fund to prevent and address malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS; however, OHCHR received reports of patients discontinuing HIV treatment due to mental health challenges and financial barriers, including transportation costs to access health services, as well as the absence of programmes to support treatment adherence.

59. Since the 2017 suspension of the Organs and Tissues Procurement System, which ensured deceased donor transplants, patients continue to struggle to find compatible healthy living donors. The public health system has only been able to provide limited support for transplants, whereby due to lack of resources, only living donors are accepted,²⁵ with patients having to cover the cost of most of their treatments and exams pre- and post-transplants, facing years-long wait for the procedure. Intermittent supply of immunosuppressants by public high-cost pharmacies left transplant patients with heightened risk of medical complications and organ rejection.²⁶ Only a few private sector facilities are allegedly meeting the required standards to facilitate the transplants at greater costs, making them unaffordable for most of the population.

²¹ A/HRC/53/54 Para 13 Recommendation (c), A/HRC/56/63 Para 9.

²² <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DW1GHg1jv-B/?igsh=NDMybTJoMDdsZmZt>.

²³ Boletines Epidemiológicos – MPPS.

²⁴ Gobierno Bolivariano garantiza atención a pacientes renales tras ataque contra Venezuela – MPPS.

²⁵ Art. 18 de la GO. N°4.497 de 1992 Ley Sobre Donación y Trasplante de Órganos, Tejidos y Células en seres Humanos.

²⁶ <https://www.radiofeyalegrianoticias.com/sistema-de-procura-de-organos-en-venezuela-tiene-casi-nueve-anos-paralizado/>.

60. According to the Ministry of Health, Venezuela continued to progressively tighten pharmaceutical licensing and sanitary-registration controls,²⁷ apparently in an effort to reverse years of regulatory collapse that had facilitated the circulation of unregulated, low-quality, and in some cases expired medicines. The persistently high cost of medicines and medical supplies has allegedly contributed to the proliferation of cheaper, unregulated drugs in the country, including products lacking dosage instructions, as well as reports of patients receiving expired medications.

61. OHCHR continued to receive allegations of patients or relatives, required to bring their own supplies to hospitals, including for bedding, food, and medical inputs, as observed in previous reporting periods.

62. Despite efforts by the Ministry of Health to distribute medical supplies and conduct prevention missions for Indigenous Peoples these have been insufficient and largely emergency-focused. For example, in Amazonas, one medical centre reportedly serves nearly 5,000 Indigenous People across some 100 communities with only one doctor, while access to hospitals often requires days of travel due to inadequate emergency-transport infrastructure and high costs. Indigenous Yanomami, Ye'kwana and Sanema Peoples in Amazonas, Bolívar and Zulia states continued to face exposure to malaria and tuberculosis, including deaths, among them children. These conditions underscore the limits of an emergency-based approach and the need for sustained investment in Indigenous health infrastructure, personnel and primary care, compounded by the continued absence of publicly available, disaggregated health data despite government pledges to strengthen data production.

63. Abortion continued to be criminalized and subject to restrictive legislation, contributing to seeking unsafe abortion, in contravention with international human rights law.²⁸ A civil society organization reported rising unsafe abortions among women and girls, affecting particularly low-income women and those in remote areas.²⁹ Organizations have also highlighted concerns about medical shortages affecting obstetric care, sexually transmitted infection detection during pregnancy, and childbirth services, alongside the spread of misinformation and insufficient education on sexual and reproductive health.

64. Restrictions on access to drinking water persisted throughout 2025, with an estimated 62 per cent of households affected by rationing and 34 per cent lacking regular supply. Approximately 42 per cent of households continued to receive water with indications of contamination.³⁰ Within this context, reports indicated increased number of cases of diarrhea, parasitic infections and vector-borne diseases, disproportionately affecting low-income households, and persons in situation of vulnerability.³¹

B. Right to adequate food

65. Challenges to the affordability of food persisted throughout the reporting period. Access affordable food was exacerbated, as the cost of the family food basket saw a steady increase throughout the reporting period, with a considerable price surge in January 2026. In March 2026, the cost of family food basket was 308,084 bolivars / USD 692.3 representing a surge of 735.4 per cent in bolivars and 31.4 per cent in USD since March 2025.³²

66. Beneficiaries of the Local Committee for Supply and Production (CLAP) in several states reported ongoing irregularities in the government's food distribution programme. In February 2026, residents of the Metropolitan Area of Caracas and the state of Miranda indicated that they had not received a CLAP delivery for five months and noted a complete

²⁷ CIRCULAR RC 007.pdf.

²⁸ CEDAW/C/VEN/CO/9 (CEDAW 2023) para.37.

²⁹ <https://faldas.red/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Abortar-tambien-es-cuidarse-voces-y-datos-desde-la-Linea-Aborto-Informacion-Segura-Ag.pdf>.

³⁰ HUMVenezuela Community Diagnostic 2025 p12-14.

³¹ Resumen de la Evaluación sobre las Condiciones de Vida y Salud de las personas mayores 2025 - Convite.

³² Centro de Documentación y Análisis Social de la Federación Venezolana de Maestros <https://fvmaestros.org/canasta-alimentaria-familiar-marzo-2026/>.

lack of information or communication regarding the programme's status. These distributions have been essential for low-income families, helping to improve both the quality and quantity of their food and offsetting the gaps created by insufficient wages and benefits.

67. Despite a decrease from 7.3 percent in 2021-2023 to 5.9 percent in 2022-2024 in the prevalence of undernourishment, reports indicated 11.7 percent of children showing signs of stunting.³³ According to civil society organizations, 3.4 million people were severely food insecure,³⁴ while humanitarian data indicates that over 5 million people were in need of immediate food assistance.³⁵

68. Food production and distribution infrastructure remains weakened by high prices of diesel, seeds and other agricultural inputs. These are exposed to risks imposed by external factors such as drought, floods and other natural occurrences, including those directly linked to climate change.³⁶ For example, in June 2025, heavy rains caused a bridge collapse in Mérida state, a major agricultural area, further isolating rural communities and disrupting access to food, medicine and markets.

C. Right to education

69. In September 2025, authorities announced, that through its strategy of school reintegration, the enrolment of over 110,000 children and young people into the national education system, which brought up to 6 million students, against 5 million in the previous cycle.³⁷ Reports indicated that irregular attendance decreased from 48 to 30 per cent between 2024 and 2025, as well as a trend of decrease of children and adolescents not in school from 18 per cent in 2023 to 14.5 per cent in 2025.³⁸ Factors contributing to absenteeism include the migration of parents or guardians, mistreatment within schools, long commuting distances, adolescent pregnancies, childcare responsibilities, and broader shortcomings within the education system.³⁹

70. Low salaries and frequent salary suspensions have resulted⁴⁰ in leaving numerous schools understaffed or unable to run classes daily. School infrastructure is inadequate or deteriorated. OHCHR received reports of school facilities in states of disrepair, lacking access to safe drinking water, relying on unsafe electrical installations, and failing to provide adequate protection against extreme heat or rainfall.

71. OHCHR received reports indicating that children from Indigenous and impoverished communities face additional barriers such as lack of transportation, malnutrition, and in the case of indigenous children, absence of civil registration documentation, lack of available education materials in indigenous languages, as well as recruitment in mining operations of children and adolescents. In Bolívar state, during the 2024–2025 academic year, only 648 Sanema children were allegedly enrolled across 42 schools, despite over 2,600 being of school age.

V. Right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment

72. Venezuela reaffirmed its commitment to environmental conservation under the Plan de la Patria 2025-2031, emphasizing biodiversity protection, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable resource use. On 5 June 2025, the Ministry of People's Power for Ecosocialism highlighted public policies focused on habitat preservation, pollution control, and

³³ The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Addressing High Food Price Inflation for Food Security and Nutrition (2025) p117.

³⁴ HUMVenezuela 2025 Follow-up Report to Venezuela's Complex Humanitarian Emergency p36

³⁵ <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000171365/download/>.

³⁶ FAO GIEWS Country Brief on Venezuela -.

³⁷ Más de 6 millones de estudiantes inician año escolar en Venezuela - Agencia Venezolana de Noticias.

³⁸ HUMVenezuela 2025 Follow-up Report to Venezuela's Complex Humanitarian Emergency p12 & 32.

³⁹ HumVenezuela Community Diagnostic p12.

⁴⁰ A/HRC/56/141 para 15.

environmental education, though specific details on their implementation remain unclear. Venezuela also pledged to a 20 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.⁴¹

73. The new Mining Organic Law and the reform of the Hydrocarbons Organic Law, which entered into force in early 2026, raise concerns about increased environmental harm and human rights impacts in Venezuela, particularly as both were adopted without meaningful public consultation. Concerns included the lack of mandatory human rights due diligence; gaps in the regulatory framework for environmental and sociocultural impact assessments characterized by incomplete, outdated environmental requirements and no provisions on sociocultural impacts, and the absence of accountability mechanisms, including access to information, independent monitoring, and effective remedies.

74. The degradation of Canaima National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, continued to raise serious concerns about safeguarding the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. Despite the government's acknowledgement of deforestation and illegal mining within the park, effective measures to address these issues remain insufficient. The proliferation of invasive species, recurring wildfires, and mining operations near the park's boundaries further exacerbate their ecological vulnerability. While efforts such as increased patrols, education programmes, and indigenous ranger collaborations were welcomed by the World Heritage Committee, persistent delays in inviting the UNESCO Reactive Monitoring Mission have hindered progress.⁴²

75. OHCHR continued to receive allegations of oil spills affecting rights to food, health, and clean water. Two spills in Caño Manamo (Pedernales, Delta Amacuro), ongoing for three years, have reportedly affected some 3,000 people, including about 1,500 Indigenous Warao People, with fish stocks reduced by up to 90 per cent. Containment efforts have proven largely ineffective, and no monitoring mechanism for environmental or health impacts has been established.

VI. Rights of Indigenous Peoples

76. Caura National Park, overlapping with Ye'kwana and Sanema territories between Amazonas and Bolívar states, was officially declared in 2017, following one consultation process that Indigenous authorities deemed opaque and non-participatory. Requests for demarcations of their territories have been pending since 2006. Despite a national pledge to accelerate the demarcation of Indigenous territories,⁴³ limited progress continues to impede Indigenous Peoples' right. Indigenous representatives have raised concerns that mercury contamination allegedly due to mining is undermining their traditional fishing and hunting practices.

77. The lack of identification, demarcation, registration and titling of Indigenous Peoples' lands contributes to the erosion of the protection of Indigenous Peoples' territories and human rights.⁴⁴ OHCHR continued to receive allegations of mining by *garimpeiros* (illegal miners) and non-State armed groups, contributing to environmental harm, displacement, disappearances, forced recruitment, including of children, and increased violence.

78. OHCHR received reports about increased risks of armed violence in Indigenous communities, including since May 2025 a growing presence of non-State armed groups engaged in illegal mining and other illicit activities in Amazonas.

79. Pemón communities in Bolívar reported an increase in criminal activities associated with mining, including human trafficking and drug use. In February 2026, two employees of the Great Council Pemón Chiefs were assaulted by unidentified armed individuals at the Council of Chiefs' office in Santa Elena de Uairén, following a Council's decision to end all mining in Pemón Territory by May 2026.

⁴¹ Segunda Contribución Determinada Nacional CDN 2025-2030.pdf.

⁴² <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/8765/>.

⁴³ Ley Orgánica del Plan de la Patria de las 7 Grandes Transformaciones 2025 – 2031, Gaceta Oficial de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela N° 6.907 Extraordinario 24 May 2025.

⁴⁴ <https://docs.un.org/A/80/181>.

80. On 10 May 2025, Yukpa chief Cesáreo Panapera in the community of Tokuko, municipality of Machiques, in the State of Zulia, was killed allegedly following a firearm attack by a landowner. Three other members of the Yukpa community were also allegedly injured. This incident appears to be part of an ongoing conflict between the Yukpa people and landowners and ranchers who carry out agricultural activities in their territory without the free, prior and informed consent of the surrounding Yukpa Indigenous communities. At the time of writing, there has been no investigation into this killing. Other cases of killings of Indigenous leaders documented by OHCHR, such as that of Virgilio Trujillo in 2022, also remain pending justice.⁴⁵

81. OHCHR received further reports indicating that Indigenous women and girls face disproportionate exposure to different forms of violence, including sexual violence, stemming both from within their communities and from external actors, including non-state armed groups and individuals linked to mining operations. Civil society organizations highlighted persistent barriers to access to justice, including limited access to information in appropriate languages, lack of resources for legal costs, distrust in the judicial system, and experiences of discrimination, all of which hinder their ability to seek and obtain redress.⁴⁶

VII. Conclusion and recommendations

82. Venezuela is at a critical juncture, at which ensuring the respect and protection of human rights are essential to advance reform and restore the rule of law and democratic governance and reinforce social cohesion. Importantly, Venezuela society needs a healing process based on justice, fairness and transparency.

83. The release of arbitrarily detained persons and some elements of the amnesty law represented important initial steps towards rebuilding trust, providing some relief to families and victims. However, further immediate measures are necessary for restoring the rule of law, and ensuring accountability and reparations for human rights violations, including guarantees of non-recurrence. Conditions of detention remain a matter of serious concern, with reports of overcrowding, inadequate access to food, water and medical care, and continued allegations of ill-treatment.

84. While limited signs of a relative opening in civic space were observed, including some stakeholder consultations, these developments remain partial. Civic and political rights continue to be constrained by persistent patterns of repression, including undue restrictions on the rights of freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, of the right to participate in public affairs, arbitrary detention, surveillance and website blocking, and the application of restrictive legislation, all of which contribute to a chilling effect on civic engagement and limit inclusive political participation.

85. The enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights remains fragile, against the backdrop of a fluctuating yet high cost of living, in particular for food, weakened medical and educational infrastructure, and exacerbated inequalities. Salaries have not kept pace with the sharp rise in living costs, and the very limited social assistance provided remains insufficient for families to meet their basic needs.

86. The rights of Indigenous Peoples, including their right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, are affected by illegal mining and other illegal activities. They also face increasing threats due to new insufficient and/or inadequate legislation regulating mining and oil activities, in the context of possible growing of mining and oil investments and inadequate protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights.

87. Promoting inclusive, safe, plural and meaningful dialogue with all relevant parts of society is key to an environment where human rights, democratic space and accountability are respected and protected.

⁴⁵ A/HRC/53/54 para 29; A/HRC/56/63 para 75, A/HRC/59/141 para 31.

⁴⁶ CEDAW/C/VEN/CO/9.

88. In addition to reiterating previously issued recommendations (see annex), OHCHR calls upon the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to:

(a) Design and implement a victim-centred justice strategy grounded in the rights to truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, based on a broad and inclusive national consultations process, ensuring that families of victims of human rights violations and abuses, such as those killed in protests and security operations, have meaningful access to justice and participation. Carry out independent, impartial and thorough investigations into possible human rights violations and abuses providing public updates on progress, including disaggregated data on investigations and prosecutions. Ensure that the amnesty law is implemented in full compliance with international human rights law.

(b) Undertake comprehensive justice and security sector reforms, based on broad national consultations with all branches of government and civil society. Ensure the independence of the Judiciary, in particular by aligning selection procedures, appointment criteria, disciplinary processes and tenure of judges and prosecutors with international human rights standards, including transparent, merit-based appointments and security of tenure, initiate vetting of sitting judicial and prosecutorial officials, as well as within the State security sector. Adopt measures to guarantee that the security forces discharge their functions in full respect of the rule of law and international human rights law, including effective accountability mechanisms.

(c) Repeal or amend legislation that is incompatible with international human rights law and standards, including the Constitutional Law Against Hate for Peaceful Coexistence and Tolerance, as well as the Law on Oversight, Regulation, Action and Financing of Non-Governmental Organizations and Non-Profit Social Organizations.

(d) Reinforce critical public services and infrastructure, ensuring, to the maximum of its available resources, that essential elements of daily life, such as sufficient food supplies, necessary medications, and functional healthcare facilities, are available, accessible, and affordable, and responsive to gender, age and disability of users of such services.

(e) Adopt concrete measures with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights, taking into account the cost of living and with a particular focus on disadvantaged and marginalized individuals or groups.

(f) Ensure that Indigenous Peoples' rights are fully observed and protected, including their right to free, prior and informed consent, particularly considering the substantial impacts that extractive industries and other developments may have on their lands, territories and resources.

(g) Adopt robust measures to safeguard Indigenous territories from the presence of non-state armed and criminal groups, addressing illegal mining and other illegal activities, ensuring the prevention, investigation and punishment of attacks, including killings, against Indigenous human rights defenders, as well as acts of sexual violence and trafficking affecting Indigenous women and girls, while guaranteeing timely and effective coordination with Indigenous justice systems.

(h) Create transparent and accountable mechanisms for reporting the allocation and distribution of revenues, including from natural resource extraction.

(i) Transparent, non-politicized, and accountable delivery of social protection programmes.

(j) Guarantee access to timely, reliable, and disaggregated data on health, nutrition, food security, social protection, labour markets and education, thereby enabling people to participate meaningfully, in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of economic policies, including budgetary and tax frameworks.

(k) Repeal discriminatory legislation, including article 432 of the Criminal Code and legalizing abortion as per the CEDAW Committee recommendation.

89. The High Commissioner reiterates his call to Members States and the international community to review and lift sectoral sanctions that exacerbate pre-existing challenges and negatively affect the enjoyment of human rights. Member States are also encouraged to contribute to efforts aimed at alleviating the human suffering in Venezuela and at strengthening governance and the rule of law, including by providing humanitarian assistance and sustained financial support to OHCHR's presence in the country.
