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Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*

Summary

In the present report, submitted pursuant to Council resolution 57/36, the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela provides an update on serious human rights violations, covering the period 1 September 2025 to 31 July 2026. The mission assesses the evolution of institutional and other structures and patterns of repression after the military attacks of 3 January 2026 carried out by the United States of America, which resulted in the apprehension of the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro Moros, and his removal from power. The mission's investigations also concentrated on the role of civilian armed groups known as *colectivos* in human rights abuses and on their interaction with State authorities.

* Agreement was reached to publish the present report after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was established by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 42/25. The mission is mandated to investigate gross violations of human rights, including extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence, committed since 2014, with a view to ensuring full accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims.[1] The mission's mandate was renewed most recently in 2024.[2]

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 57/36, in which the Council specified that the investigations of the mission should include a particular focus on the situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the lead-up to, during and after the 2024 presidential elections, and on the violence by armed individuals known as *colectivos.* The present report is the first submitted by the mission in its current composition.[3]

B. Focus of the report

3. The reporting period was marked by the military intervention carried out by the United States of America on 3 January 2026, which led to the apprehension of the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro Moros, who had been in power since 2014. It also includes the aftermath of the two deadly earthquakes that devastated areas of the country on 24 June.

4. In accordance with the mandate set by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 57/36, the mission continued its investigations into the cycle of repression in the lead-up to, during and after the 2024 presidential elections. The more detailed findings of the mission are set out in two conference room papers accompanying the present report. The first paper provides the mission's detailed findings on the principal human rights violations falling within the mission's mandate. The second contains an analysis of the role of armed civilian groups known as *colectivos* and their links to the State.[4]

5. The mission continued to focus its investigations on violations and crimes committed against real or perceived opponents of the Government. This focus, however, is in no way intended to minimize or overlook other human rights violations and should not be interpreted to mean that such violations did not occur.

C. Methodology and standard of proof

6. The mission conducts its investigations in accordance with established methodologies and best practices recognized by the United Nations. To that end, the mission conducted interviews with victims, their relatives, witnesses, officials, former members of the Government and of security forces, and others, and reviewed public documents, official statements, photographs, videos and open-source information. The mission carries out its work according to the principles of independence, impartiality, objectivity, transparency, integrity and the "do no harm" principle and applies a gender perspective throughout its work.[5]

[1] Human Rights Council resolution 45/20.
[2] Human Rights Council resolution 57/36.
[3] The mission is currently composed of Sofía Macher (Chair), Alex Neve and María Eloísa Quintero.
[4] The conference room papers will be available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index.
[5] The mission's methodology and legal framework are detailed in the conference room papers accompanying the present report.

II. Context

A. 2024 post-electoral crisis and its aftermath

7. As previously reported by the mission, the presidential election of 28 July 2024, in which Mr. Maduro was proclaimed the winner despite extensive evidence and international opinion challenging the official results, triggered a wave of mass protests that were met with a severe crackdown by State authorities, prompting a sharp escalation in State repression. In its September 2024 report, the mission concluded that the State had reactivated and intensified the harshest and most violent mechanisms of its repressive apparatus.[6]

8. The State crackdown was conducted mainly through indiscriminate arrests carried out during or immediately after protests and selective arrests of real or perceived opponents pursuant to a security mobilization referred to as Operation Tun Tun. In early August, within days of the election, Mr. Maduro announced that 2,200 persons, who were characterized as "terrorists", had been detained. The detentions were followed systematically by enforced disappearances for periods ranging from days to months. Cases of torture and ill-treatment in detention facilities increased, often inflicted as a means of extracting false confessions implicating opposition leaders. At least 25 people were killed in the context of post-electoral protests, according to the mission's investigations.[7]

9. The mission found that State authorities, facing the real possibility of losing power through the elections, had reactivated a policy to silence, discourage and quash opposition to the Government. The mission had reasonable grounds to believe that many of the violent acts documented around the electoral crisis amounted to crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, including the crime of persecution on political grounds.[8]

10. A further peak in the repression came in late January 2025; 84 detentions around the time of the presidential inauguration were documented by the mission,[9] based on estimates provided by non-governmental organizations. Thereafter, the repressive cycle entered a new phase, characterized by more selective but nevertheless sustained forms of persecution and control.

11. The overall number of arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances – although still significant – decreased considerably in 2025 compared with 2024, with occasional surges around regional and parliamentary elections, held in May 2025.[10] The last quarter of 2025, at a time of mounting military pressure from the United States, was marked by a continuation of similar patterns of repression.

12. The apprehension of Mr. Maduro, during what is widely considered to have been an unlawful armed attack by the United States on 3 January, marked a dramatic shift in the country's political landscape. The subsequent developments were accompanied by a material change in the human rights situation in the country, primarily signalling the end of the post-electoral crackdown, even as serious human rights violations and systemic concerns persisted.

B. Armed attack of 3 January 2026

13. In late August 2025, the United States launched a military campaign, which became known as Operation Southern Spear, reportedly aimed at countering what it described as "narco-terrorist organizations".[11] In that context, the United States carried out a series of

[6] A/HRC/57/57, para. 117.
[7] A/HRC/60/61, para. 43.
[8] A/HRC/57/57, paras. 104 and 105.
[9] A/HRC/60/61, para. 22.
[10] Ibid.
[11] See https://media.defense.gov/2026/May/21/2003935694/-1/-1/1/OSS_Q2_MAR2026_FINAL_508.PDF.

aerial strikes against vessels allegedly involved in transnational drug trafficking in areas of the Caribbean Sea neighbouring the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The attacks extended to the Eastern Pacific Ocean and continued into 2026, resulting in over 200 casualties.[12] United Nations human rights experts noted that the attacks might constitute unlawful killings carried out without due process of law.[13] The precise locations of the attacks were not disclosed, with the exception of one that took place in a Venezuelan port. The number of deaths that took place in Venezuelan territory or involved Venezuelan citizens remains unknown.

14. On 3 January 2026, the United States launched a military operation designated Operation Absolute Resolve, consisting of coordinated air strikes against airports, airbases and military installations in various parts of the country. The attacks resulted in 83 fatalities, according to the Venezuelan authorities;[14] media also reported the deaths of at least two civilians.[15] The mission has referred to the United States military intervention as breaching international law.[16]

15. During the operation, United States forces apprehended Mr. Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, and subsequently transferred them to the United States, where they currently face trial on criminal charges related to drug trafficking and possession of weapons.

C. Key developments after 3 January 2026

16. In the wake of the military attack, the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, stated that his Government would "run the country until such time as we can do a safe, proper and judicious transition".[17] Since that time, it has become apparent that all major political, economic and security decisions in the country are being instigated, authorized or approved by the Government of the United States. The Secretary of State of the United States, Marco Rubio, announced a three-tier plan of "stability, recovery, then transition"[18] which, at least in its initial phase, prioritized economic and commercial interests over democratic reform or human rights considerations.

17. Following the apprehension of Mr. Maduro, the Supreme Court of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela appointed the Vice-President, Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, as interim President. After assuming power on 5 January 2026, Ms. Rodríguez announced a "new political moment"[19] and oversaw a broad reshuffling across key State institutions.

18. During the first months of 2026, the heads of 15 out of 33 ministries were appointed or reassigned, including Vladimir Padrino, a military general, who was reassigned from his position of Minister of Defence. The high command of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces was also restructured. The minister responsible for industry, Alex Saab, was dismissed, arrested and subsequently extradited to the United States on corruption charges.

[12] See https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/10/29/us/us-caribbean-pacific-boat-strikes.html (accessed on 4 August 2026).

[13] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/11/unprovoked-lethal-strikes-united-states-against-vessels-sea-may-amount.

[14] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qylVHW92lsQ (in Spanish).

[15] See https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articles/cqj2v8507kdo (in Spanish).

[16] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/01/venezuela-un-fact-finding-mission-expresses-grave-concern-following-us?sub-site=HRC.

[17] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pA48gVurn4A.

[18] See https://www.reuters.com/world/us/rubio-says-us-plan-venezuela-is-stability-recovery-then-transition-2026-01-07/.

[19] See http://www.miranda.gob.ve/index.php/delcy-rodriguez-venezuela-se-abre-a-un-nuevo-momento-politico/ (in Spanish).

19. Tarek William Saab, who had served as Attorney General since his appointment in 2017, was replaced by Larry Devoe, the former Executive Secretary of the country's National Human Rights Council. Eglée González Lobato was appointed to head the Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman's Office), which serves as the national human rights institution. On 27 April, the Supreme Court announced the retirement of eight of its judges. At least four other judges resigned or were reassigned to other State functions.

20. Beginning in late 2025, the authorities had initiated the conditional release of some individuals who had been arbitrarily detained during the 2024/25 post-electoral crackdown. The gradual release of prisoners continued under the Government of Ms. Rodríguez and was extended to political leaders, journalists and civil society actors.

21. On 19 February, the National Assembly unanimously adopted the amnesty law for democratic coexistence. The mission, along with numerous international and domestic stakeholders, expressed concerns regarding the limited scope and other serious deficiencies of the law.[20] On 23 April, the interim President declared that the process of amnesty had concluded, despite the law itself remaining in force. Authorities have nonetheless announced further releases.

22. The partial lifting of economic sanctions by the United States has facilitated renewed activity in the oil sector and paved the way for new investment in mining, infrastructure, transport and electricity. Similarly, the lifting of financial restrictions enabled the central bank and other institutions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to re-enter international financial markets and restructure external debt. In April, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank announced the resumption of dealings with the country, which had been suspended since 2019.

23. On 12 June 2026, the United States launched an air strike that killed Héctor Rusthenford Guerrero (known as Niño Guerrero), leader of the criminal organization Tren de Aragua. The strike was part of a security operation coordinated with the national armed forces, targeting criminal groups involved in illegal mining and drug trafficking in Bolívar State.

24. In relation to this and other military operations in or near Venezuelan territory, the mission recalls that the right to life is of paramount importance under international law. Any deprivation of life must comply with the applicable standards of international human rights law and, where applicable, international humanitarian law.

D. June 2026 earthquakes

25. On 24 June 2026, two major earthquakes struck the country's north-central area, causing mass casualties, widespread displacement and severe damage across La Guaira, the Greater Caracas area and neighbouring states. The official death toll at the time of writing was 6,125 persons,[21] but tens of thousands may still be missing.

26. The disaster deepened humanitarian needs, disrupted basic services and exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities. Civil society denounced the inadequate State response, the politicization of aid, restrictions on access for international rescue teams and self-organized community groups and restrictions on media reporting.

[20] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/02/venezuela-un-fact-finding-mission-cautiously-welcomes-draft-amnesty-law?sub-site=HRC.

[21] See https://x.com/jorgerpsuv/status/2084386879412064289 (figures as of 3 August 2026, in Spanish).

III. Mission findings

A. Continuity of the State's repressive apparatus

1. Elements of political liberalization

27. In the wake of the 3 January attacks by the United States and the apprehension of Mr. Maduro, the new government authorities signalled a degree of political opening. This was reflected in changes in public discourse and in the adoption of a series of measures of political liberalization. However, in the absence of sustained institutional and other reforms, progress remained piecemeal and fragile.

28. On 23 January, the interim President launched the programme for peace and democratic coexistence, aimed at promoting dialogue among diverse sectors. Thereafter she introduced before the National Assembly the amnesty law for democratic coexistence, the declared objectives of which were the development of conditions for democratic participation, political pluralism and conflict resolution through peaceful means. As a symbolic gesture, the Government also announced the closure of El Helicoide, the detention facility operated by the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service, which had been widely used as a site of arbitrary detention and torture.

29. Civil society actors were invited to participate in limited consultation processes regarding new legislation, such as the amnesty law, appointments to senior positions within State institutions and the reform of the criminal justice system. The Ombudsman's Office and the Attorney General's Office also sought to engage with civil society.

30. Signs of an easing of political restrictions were also reflected in greater scope for civil society organizations and political actors to organize meetings, public events and rallies, and in a greater degree of tolerance for public criticism. This was evidenced by a marked increase in social protests during the first quarter of 2026, when the Observatorio Venezolano de Conflictividad Social documented 1,926 protests – a 144 per cent increase compared with the same period in 2025.[22]

31. Despite signs of political liberalization, there has been no substantive dismantling or meaningful reform of the State's repressive apparatus. The mission has reconstructed and analysed the composition of this apparatus, which is composed of more than 60 institutions, as well as "actors" (persons performing formal or informal functions within the apparatus) and "authors" or "perpetrators" (persons for whom the mission has, over the years, established grounds to attribute responsibility).[23]

32. The persistence of repressive legislation and institutional structures, the continued presence of actors associated with past patterns of repression, and ongoing impunity for serious human rights violations mean that the foundations of the repressive system remain largely intact.

2. Continuity of actors involved in the repression

33. The continuity or reassignment of officials who held leadership positions during the Government of Mr. Maduro is a clear indication of the continuity of the State's repressive apparatus. Owing to their institutional roles or the de facto control they exercised over State institutions, many were involved to varying degrees in the State's repression and/or in the dismantling of democratic institutions.

[22] See https://www.observatoriodeconflictos.org.ve/destacado/conflictividad-social-en-venezuela-durante-el-primer-trimestre-de-2026 (in Spanish).

[23] The specific details are developed in the conference room paper containing detailed conclusions on principal human rights violations. The paper will be available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index.

34. The interim President, Ms. Rodríguez, had held successive senior positions in the Cabinet of Mr. Maduro from December 2014, including during the harshest cycles of repression. In 2017, she chaired the National Constituent Assembly, which supplanted, in an irregular manner, the legislative branch. From 2018, Ms. Rodríguez had served as Executive Vice-President, and had been formally responsible for overseeing the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service – one of the main instruments of State repression.

35. On 5 January, the brother of Ms. Rodríguez, Jorge Rodríguez, was reappointed President of the National Assembly, a position he had held continuously since 2021. In that capacity, he had been instrumental in advancing legislation enabling political persecution. In that role, and in his previous capacity as Minister of Communication and Information, he has been a prominent spokesperson for State repressive policies, including the 2024 post-electoral crackdown, and has actively used public platforms to intimidate or discredit opposition leaders and civil society actors.

36. The mission conducted an analysis of the current holders of government, security and intelligence positions. The analysis found that a significant number of individuals holding such responsibilities at the time of the writing the present report had previously been identified by the mission as having committed, ordered, facilitated or otherwise contributed to the commission of human rights violations, including crimes against humanity.[24]

37. Upon her appointment, the interim President initiated a restructuring of the administration, making new appointments and reassignments in key government and military positions. The new appointments and reassignments involved individuals who had played key roles in various phases of State repression over the last decade, such as the former Minister of Defence, Vladimir Padrino, who held the position between October 2014 and March 2026, and the former Attorney General, Tarek William Saab, who held the position from 2017 until his resignation in February 2026.

38. Despite their responsibility for grave human rights violations, the two above-mentioned men have not been investigated or prosecuted, but rather appointed to new positions within the Government. Mr. Padrino became Minister of Productive Agriculture and Lands, while Mr. Saab first assumed temporary leadership of the Ombudsman's Office and subsequently took charge of the government cultural programme entitled "Great Mission Long Live Venezuela, My Beloved Homeland".

39. Before his appointment as such, the new Minister of Defence, Gustavo González López, held various senior security positions under Mr. Maduro, heading the ministry responsible for the interior, the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service and the Directorate-General of Military Counter-intelligence. Other actors involved in past repression continued to hold their same positions in security and intelligence institutions, including the minister responsible for the interior, Diosdado Cabello. In previous reports,[25] the mission has linked Mr. González and Mr. Cabello to serious human rights violations and crimes against humanity.

3. Continuity of the legal framework enabling repression

40. As documented in the mission's previous reports, the legal system has been pivotal in State repression. Coupled with sweeping misapplication of the criminal justice system, the system of repression was supported by a legal basis derived from a series of instruments used to restrict civil society and dissent.

[24] For the full list of actors and perpetrators identified by the mission, see the conference room paper containing detailed conclusions on principal human rights violations, mentioned above.

[25] See A/HRC/51/43, and the conference room papers entitled "Detailed findings of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela" (2021) and "Crimes against humanity committed through the State's intelligence services: structures and individuals involved in the implementation of the plan to repress opposition to the Government" (2022), available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index.

41. While some of those instruments date back to institutional reforms under the Government (1999–2013) of former President Hugo Chávez Frías, the core of the legal framework was adopted after 2014. A key instrument is the constitutional law against hatred and for peaceful coexistence and tolerance, adopted by the National Constituent Assembly in 2017, and which has been systematically used as a tool to quash public criticism and political dissent. The Organic Law of the Liberator Simón Bolívar against the Imperialist Blockade and in Defence of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, adopted in 2024, similarly provides severe penalties against persons deemed to support or promote international sanctions against the country.

42. The 2024 Law on the Control, Regularization, Operations and Financing of Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Organizations imposed new legal and operational hurdles on civil society organizations, including in the key area of access to funding. The mission has warned that the law is a mechanism of political control.[26]

4. Continued closure of civic and democratic space

43. The continued existence of legal instruments that have been used to criminalize various forms of opposition to the Government has had a chilling effect on civil society and political actors, who continue to operate in uncertainty regarding the limits of permissible public commentary and conduct. Surveillance, fear of retaliation and self-censorship continue to be widespread. Moreover, the mission continued to document cases involving arbitrary arrests (see paras. 57–61 below); criminal prosecutions, including under the law against hatred; and attacks and other restrictions targeting political opponents, human rights defenders, journalists and other individuals expressing critical views.

44. Despite gestures of political liberalization, civic space and democratic space remain severely restricted due to the cumulative effects of decades of constraints on the free functioning of the media, non-governmental organizations, labour unions and political parties. As previously reported by the mission, restrictions have included the closure of media outlets, the blocking of news channels and human rights organization web pages, and restrictions on access to social media platforms.[27] At the time of writing, as many as 202 web pages continued to be blocked, according to one non-governmental organization.[28]

45. The activities of opposition parties continued to be undermined by the judicial appropriation of their leadership structures, legal status and assets, by the ongoing disqualification of their leaders and by continued acts of intimidation and harassment. The main opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, María Corina Machado, remained barred from re-entering the country.

5. Continuity of institutions involved in repression

46. The repressive apparatus is sustained not only by individuals, but by the interaction or inaction of various institutions. The country's intelligence services (the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service and the Directorate-General of Military Counter-intelligence), which were previously identified by the mission as the principal instruments of political repression,[29] continue to operate under the same structures and with the same rules. The Bolivarian National Guard, whose role in human rights violations was examined by the mission in 2025,[30] has not undergone any organizational reform. No internal review,

[26] A/HRC/60/61, para. 86.

[27] A/HRC/54/57, paras. 50 ff. and the 2024 conference room paper containing the detailed findings of the mission (available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index).

[28] See https://bloqueos.vesinfiltro.org/ (accessed on 4 August 2026, in Spanish).

[29] A/HRC/51/43, paras. 23 ff., and the 2022 conference room paper on crimes against humanity committed through the State's intelligence services (available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index).

[30] See the 2025 conference room paper containing the detailed findings of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela focused on crimes against humanity, particularly the role of the Bolivarian National Guard. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index (Spanish only).

disciplinary process or change in operational practice has been undertaken, and the same units and detention facilities remain in use.

47. The judiciary has played a key role in facilitating and providing legal cover to repression, a concern that remains unaddressed. In April, eight Supreme Court judges were made to retire and two others resigned, significantly reshaping the composition of the Court. Civil society denounced a lack of transparency in the appointment of the new judges by the Judicial Nominations Committee of the National Assembly. In May, the Law on the Supreme Court was amended to expand the Court's composition from 20 to 32 judges, increasing the risk of political influence by the executive and legislative branches.

48. During the reporting period, the authorities initiated a process to reform the criminal justice system, launching a nationwide consultation led by the Attorney General's Office. It remains to be seen whether the process will address factors previously identified by the mission as eroding the independence of the judicial system, such as the mechanisms of appointment, promotion and removal of judges and prosecutors, the extensive use of provisional judges and prosecutors and the absence of internal accountability mechanisms.

6. Lack of accountability and impunity

49. The change in government following 3 January has not been accompanied by any acknowledgement of the need to recognize past human rights violations and crimes, provide reparations to victims and fulfil the obligation to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible, as required by international law. The retention in office of senior officials and other actors implicated in violations and crimes within the executive, legislative and judicial branches remains a major impediment to advancing this agenda.

50. The debate around the amnesty law for democratic coexistence was a litmus test in this regard. Despite its official title and stated objectives, the amnesty law was never conceived as a means to provide restitution for rights violations or offer reparation to the people subjected to politically motivated imprisonment or prosecution. The possibility that the amnesty could potentially apply to the future prosecution of State agents under domestic law was never publicly considered and seems to be moot, given that the interim President announced in April that the law would no longer be implemented.

51. Lack of progress towards accountability was accompanied by the National Assembly's political declaration in December 2025 condemning the International Criminal Court, followed by the formal denunciation of the Rome Statute in July 2026. The denunciation was publicly supported by the United States, which more broadly has launched a campaign to "dismantle" the Court.[31] Although the withdrawal does not affect the Court's ongoing investigations into crimes allegedly committed prior to its entry into effect, the denunciation sends a troubling signal regarding the authorities' lack of commitment to accountability and efforts to combat impunity.

52. Absent any progress at the domestic level, proceedings before foreign courts exercising universal jurisdiction may constitute an important avenue for justice for victims of international crimes. The mission welcomed an extradition request issued by a federal court in Argentina in June 2026 concerning a former military official allegedly involved in the crackdown carried out during the 2014 protests who was living in Spain.[32]

B. Update on principal human rights violations

53. The mission continued its investigations into the principal violations within its mandate. The pattern of political repression in the country remained largely unchanged between September 2025 and January 2026, with continued arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment and serious due process violations targeting real or

[31] See https://time.com/article/2026/07/14/international-criminal-court-icc-trump-rubio-state-department/.

[32] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/06/venezuela-un-fact-finding-mission-ffm-welcomes-extradition-request-arising.

perceived government opponents and, in some cases, their relatives. Political developments following 3 January 2026 were accompanied by a decline in long-term politically motivated detentions and, therefore, also in the number of enforced disappearances. Despite the significant release of prisoners, hundreds of individuals continued to be arbitrarily detained, enduring harsh conditions in facilities where torture and ill-treatment remained endemic.

1. Arbitrary deprivation of life

54. The mission registered the deaths of at least three men detained for political reasons during the reporting period, a figure that reflects a persistent trend. This does not include the case of Víctor Hugo Quero, who, according to the official account, passed away in July 2025 while forcibly disappeared (see paras. 69 and 70 below).

55. The case of the leader of the opposition party Acción Democrática and former governor of Nueva Esparta State, Alfredo Díaz, who died on 6 December 2025 while in detention at El Helicoide, is an example. Mr. Díaz had been arbitrarily detained on 24 November 2024 in Ospino, Portuguesa State, by intelligence agents. By October 2025, he had been held incommunicado for nearly 10 months without access to specialized medical treatment, despite showing serious symptoms of illness. The failure to provide specialized care to Mr. Díaz may have contributed to his death. Despite public calls for an independent and impartial investigation into his death, no investigation has been conducted to date.

56. These deaths in custody are just a fraction of a much larger estimated total.[33] The deaths are also inextricably linked to concerns about conditions of detention and lack of access to adequate medical care in detention centres, which the mission has documented extensively during the current reporting period and in previous years.

2. Arbitrary detention

(a) Changes in patterns of arrest

57. According to civil society, at least 224 persons were arbitrarily detained for political reasons between 1 September 2025 and 29 July 2026. Of those detentions, 92 per cent (207) occurred before the end of January. From that moment onwards, the mission began to see a sharp decline in long-term detentions.

58. Cases of detention occurring before January 3 that were investigated by the mission were consistent with patterns previously identified, particularly in the context of the 2024 post-electoral crackdown. Those detained included real and perceived political opponents or critics of the Government, including political activists and journalists. In at least two cases investigated by the mission, the persons detained were relatives of the direct target, following a previously identified pattern. The detentions were carried out by intelligence and security agencies without judicial warrants and were followed by periods of incommunicado detention, enforced disappearance and serious violations of due process guarantees.

59. After 3 January, the mission observed a shift in patterns of detention. In the immediate aftermath, there was a surge in arbitrary detentions targeting individuals perceived as supporting the apprehension of Mr. Maduro or of having criticized the Government. Those detained included journalists covering political developments, persons who publicly celebrated the events of 3 January and individuals accused of disseminating information or opinions about what had transpired through social media. In most cases, detainees were held for short periods, subjected to intimidation and questioning regarding their political views or online activities and then released.

60. Opposition leader Juan Pablo Guanipa, who had been detained since May 2025, was among a group of prisoners released on 8 February. That same day, he was rearrested by unidentified individuals and placed under house arrest. Authorities claimed that he had violated the conditions of his release by giving statements to the media and participating in public gatherings. He was subsequently released from house arrest on 20 February under the amnesty law.

[33] See https://oveprisiones.com/informes/informe-anual-2025/ (in Spanish).

61. A notable new pattern that the mission has identified is the use of short-term arbitrary detention and measures of intimidation against those perceived as opposing the Government, including those who have been subjected previously to long-term arbitrary detention. These carry particular resonance given the context of widespread abuses over the past decade, a potent reminder to political activists that their activities are monitored and that the repressive apparatus remains available to limit freedoms if the authorities decide to do so.

(b) Release of persons detained for political reasons

62. The reduction in long-term detentions after January occurred in parallel with the release of substantial numbers of prisoners by the Government. The releases, which started in December 2025, gained momentum in early February 2026 and continued with the adoption of the amnesty law for democratic coexistence later that month. Additional releases were registered in May and June, despite the interim President's announcement of the end of the amnesty in April.

63. The names of individuals released from detention were never made public; the Attorney General's Office cited privacy concerns as the grounds for the decision. In the absence of official transparent and verifiable data, the numbers of prisoners released have been heavily contested. According to cumulative figures provided by the interim President, up to 1,521 persons had been released from detention since December 2025. A non-governmental source verified that, at the time of the writing of the present report, 1,099 persons had been released since 1 September 2025.

64. In addition to facilitating the release of persons deprived of liberty, the amnesty law provided for the lifting of alternative measures to detention and the termination of criminal proceedings against those who benefited from the amnesty. According to the authorities, 8,740 individuals benefited from these measures and thereby obtained "full freedom"; the majority of those individuals were no longer in prison. At the same time, approximately 10 per cent of the detainees released from prison outside the framework of the amnesty law were only granted conditional release and remained subject to criminal proceedings, according to non-governmental sources.

(c) Persons remaining in arbitrary detention

65. The large-scale release of prisoners led to a significant reduction in the number of persons detained for political reasons, yet a substantial number of prisoners remained in arbitrary detention. According to figures reported by non-governmental organizations at the time of writing the present report, between 379 and 500 persons remained in State custody serving sentences or awaiting trial.[34] The persons detained continued to be subjected to harsh conditions of detention and to frequent instances of torture and ill-treatment (see paras. 71–84 below).

66. The mission reiterates that arbitrary detention constitutes a continuing human rights violation. Arbitrary detention is not only a concern at the moment of initial arrest. Rather, it represents ongoing illegal conduct by the State that continues for as long as the State fails to provide an individualized justification rooted in the proportionality, necessity and formal lawfulness of the confinement.

3. Enforced disappearance

67. The mission continues to observe a consistent pattern of enforced disappearance following arbitrary detention. The cases investigated by the mission provide ample evidence of the deliberate refusal by the authorities to disclose the whereabouts of detainees – even for prolonged periods – despite relentless search efforts by their families. The mission noted that the systematic occurrence of enforced disappearance is compounded by the absence of

[34] See https://foropenal.com/articulo/la-organizacion-no-gubernamental-foro-penal-informo-que-hasta-el-27-de-julio-de-2026-se-registran-379-presos-politicos-en-venezuela (figure as at 27 July 2026, in Spanish) and https://www.jepvenezuela.com/indicadores/presos-politicos/ (figure as at 1 August 2026, in Spanish).

transparency in official detainee registries across all detention facilities, the widespread use of incommunicado detention and the lack of access to legal counsel.

68. The case of Mr. Quero placed the issue of enforced disappearance, and the suffering inflicted on the families, at the centre of public attention. A street vendor, Mr. Quero was detained on 1 January 2025 by officials of the Directorate-General of Military Counter-intelligence. His location was unknown despite repeated efforts undertaken by his 81-year-old mother, Carmen Teresa Navas, for more than 16 months to obtain information about his whereabouts and condition. She never received official confirmation regarding her son's location, condition or legal status.

69. On 7 May 2026, the ministry responsible for the penitentiary service publicly acknowledged that Mr. Quero had reportedly died on 24 July 2025 at the Doctor Carlos Arvelo Military Hospital and had been buried on 30 July 2025 without notification being provided to, or the participation of, his family. Unusually, and potentially related to the very high level of public scrutiny surrounding this case, the Public Prosecution Service initiated a criminal investigation into his death in State custody, which shed no light on those responsible. Tragically, Ms. Navas died on 17 May 2026, 10 days after learning of her son's death.

70. The mission also investigated a case involving 13 military personnel who, despite having completed their sentences, were transferred from the Ramo Verde prison on 3 November 2025, without any notification being provided to their relatives. Family members approached multiple authorities and detention facilities to obtain information, but the detainees' whereabouts remained unknown until the end of January 2026, when relatives were informed that they were being held at the Guaicaipuro Military Prosecution and Sentencing Centre (known as Fuerte Guaicaipuro), and that they had been charged with new offences.

4. Torture and other ill-treatment

(a) Torture

71. The mission continued to document instances of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment perpetrated against real or perceived opponents of the Government while they were in the custody of security forces in prisons and other detention facilities. The situation is further compounded by the absence of any known State measures taken to address such treatment, either before or after 3 January.

72. During the reporting period, the mission focused particular attention on the maximum-security prisons El Rodeo I and Fuerte Guaicaipuro, both in Miranda State, where the largest numbers of individuals detained for political reasons are held.

73. The prevalent methods of torture remain the same as those previously identified by the mission, including punching and beatings with metallic objects; electric shocks, including to the genitals; suffocation with plastic bags; suspension by the hands or the feet for prolonged periods of time; and prolonged confinement in isolation or under other harsh conditions. In addition, the mission identified previously unreported methods of torture, including forced intubation and catheterization.

74. In the men's section of El Rodeo I prison, the mission documented numerous cases of torture and ill-treatment perpetrated against inmates in retaliation for protests, including hunger strikes, initiated by the inmates or their relatives, demanding their release or denouncing their conditions of detention. The mission found that the most common form of punishment consisted of transferring prisoners to one of eight cells on the "fourth floor", where they were held in prolonged isolation from the rest of the prison population. Victims reported being suspended by their wrists, kept naked and exposed to low temperatures and subjected to continuous beatings by prison guards. According to the testimonies, this form of torture continued well into 2026, and was inflicted against prisoners who protested against detention conditions after the earthquakes.

75. In the same detention centre, the mission documented at least six cases of force-feeding through intubation of detainees on hunger strike. The mission notes that, according to international human rights mechanisms, force-feeding may, depending on the specific circumstances, amount to torture or ill-treatment.[35] In the cases investigated by the mission, detainees were subjected to forced intubation only a few days after starting their hunger strike, without their consent and in the absence of any evident health-related justification. The method was used as a form of intimidation to discourage others from joining future strikes, as other detainees were forced to witness the painful procedure. In addition to being forcibly fed, the detainees were also subjected to forced urinary catheterization, a measure that had no apparent medical justification. This measure, which was experienced by victims as invasive and degrading, may constitute a form of sexual violence.

76. The mission documented a previously unreported method of torture used in El Rodeo I prison. The "time machine" was documented in at least four cases investigated by the mission, all involving male detainees. According to consistent testimonies, the method involved confining groups of approximately 15 detainees to a sealed underground cistern, where they were forced to remain naked and in complete darkness. The detainees were confined in those conditions for periods that ranged from a few days to three months, with no access to open air or sanitation. In some instances, the punishment was inflicted on the same inmate more than once. Victims explained that the practice was known as the "time machine" because the conditions of extreme isolation and sensory deprivation caused them to lose their sense of time.

77. The mission investigated similar allegations of torture in the Fuerte Guaicaipuro prison, a men's facility that holds military personnel detained in relation to alleged conspiracies against the Government. There, the mission documented the common practice of caging prisoners in pit-like cells dug below ground level, exposed to the elements. They were monitored constantly by guards, who poured cold water over the prisoners during the night and urinated on them. Inmates received food only two to three times per week, resulting in serious malnutrition. Detainees remained in these conditions for prolonged periods, with no opportunity to leave their cells even for sanitation purposes. In several cases investigated by the mission, the inmates were forced to dip their hands into the latrine before eating with their bare hands or were given food contaminated with faeces.

78. The information gathered by the mission indicates that another form of torture allegedly used in Fuerte Guaicaipuro involved confinement in a punishment cell known as "The Firefly". The cell was reportedly infested with rats and insects, and detainees were held there for several days under continuous artificial lighting. Victims were allegedly kept naked and forced to remain in a squatting position with their hands and feet bound. While restrained, they were subjected to beatings and doused with ice-cold water by prison guards.

79. The mission notes that forced nudity was a common feature of various forms of torture or ill-treatment. This practice heightened the victim's vulnerability, reinforcing the fear of being subjected to sexual or gender-based violence and exacerbating the psychological suffering inflicted.

80. The specificity of the mission's findings regarding these methods of torture is notable. These are practices and conduct specific to those facilities, and the institutions and personnel who are responsible for running them. The mission therefore finds that the torture and ill-treatment of prisoners in these circumstances are not isolated acts, but reflect an institutionalized culture fuelled by tolerance and impunity, requiring specific and detailed remedial action on the part of the authorities running these facilities to root out and change these practices.

[35] E/CN.4/2006/120, paras. 72 ff.; and CAT/C/ISR/CO/5, para. 27. See also European Court of Human Rights, *Nevmerzhitsky v. Ukraine*, Application No. 54825/00, Judgment, 5 April 2005, paras. 98 ff., and *Yakovlyev v. Ukraine*, Application No. 42010/18, Judgment, 8 December 2022, paras. 45 ff.

(b) Conditions of detention amounting to ill-treatment

81. After 3 January, an increase in public denunciations by family members and recently released detainees brought greater visibility to detention conditions in several facilities. Concerns regarding conditions of detention during the reporting period were broadly consistent with patterns previously documented by the mission.

82. Numerous testimonies gathered by the mission consistently described poor hygiene conditions, limited access to safe drinking water and inadequate nutrition. Access to medical care remained severely restricted, including for detainees with pre-existing or chronic health conditions. Insufficient opportunities for time outside cells and limited access to natural light were also reported, contributing to the deterioration of detainees' physical and mental health. The mission recalls that international human rights mechanisms have found that the cumulative effect of inadequate detention conditions may amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, particularly when such conditions are sustained over prolonged periods or compounded by other restrictive measures.[36]

83. Access to medical assistance is systematically described as limited and inadequate. The mission received information on the lack of adequate gender-sensitive medical care and services, especially for women with previous medical conditions. The mission also received information that pregnant women in detention are in some cases denied access to prenatal care.

84. Mounting public denunciation by inmates' relatives and non-governmental organizations after 3 January, coupled with episodes of internal unrest in detention centres, led to limited improvements in some detention centres, such as improved hygiene conditions and provision of food. In El Rodeo I, sustained complaints led to the discontinuation of the practice whereby family members were required to be hooded while escorted to visit detainees, an arrangement that had been described as intimidation and humiliating. In Fuerte Guaicaipuro, families of prisoners reported that the conditions of detention improved with the change of director in April 2026. However, these were piecemeal changes that failed to address many other major problems, as highlighted above.

C. Civilian armed groups known as *colectivos* and their links to the State

85. In previous reports, the mission documented the participation of pro-government civilian armed groups, known as *colectivos*, in political repression, security operations and other forms of social control. Building on its previous findings, and pursuant to the request made by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 57/36, the mission has carried out a comprehensive investigation into the origins, the nature and the role of *colectivos* in human rights violations and abuses and, especially, the linkages between these groups and State authorities. The findings from this investigation are detailed more fully in a separate conference room paper accompanying the present report.[37]

1. Background

86. *Colectivos* are self-organized civilian groups that operate with varying degrees of State institutional support and exercise public functions relating to local governance, security and social control. State authorities have recurrently mobilized these groups to participate in the violent suppression of protests, the targeted repression of real or perceived opponents, and operations against organized crime.

87. Historically, *colectivos* emerged in the 1960s as highly ideologized and informal groupings of former guerrilla members focused on community support activities and anti-government political mobilization. Well-known groups such as La Piedrita or Movimiento Revolucionario Tupamaro date from this period. Following an attempted coup in 2002, the former President, Hugo Chávez, incorporated these *colectivos* into a broader strategy to expand the social base of the Government and ensure its political continuity under

[36] A/66/268, paras. 76–89.

[37] The paper will be available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index.

the banner of the "civil-military union". During Mr. Maduro's presidency, many *colectivos* became involved in political repression and started to engage in illicit economies, with the acquiescence of or in collusion with State authorities. The *colectivo* known as Tres Raíces, which operates throughout the country and includes former police officials and former inmates among its members, is one such example.

2. State support and coordination

88. The mission identified substantial evidence of long-standing relationships between *colectivos* and State institutions that extend beyond mere tolerance of *colectivo* activities or acquiescence. These links encompass political support, financial assistance, logistical cooperation, operational coordination and institutional protection.

89. The evidence gathered by the mission shows that *colectivos* respond to operational orders and maintain direct relationships with various ministers, members of the National Assembly, governors, mayors, police directors, military personnel, security organizations, government officials and even judges and prosecutors. The mission identified a list of actors and perpetrators who played that role.

90. A key pillar of State support to *colectivos* has been the granting of access to diverse funding streams. Ways in which State authorities ensure such access to funding range from remunerating *colectivo* members through their incorporation into the payrolls of State institutions to entrusting them with the delivery of government aid and basic goods or services, such as water, power, fuel, food boxes, medicines or currency exchange, enabling them to profit unlawfully from such activities. In some instances, State authorities allowed *colectivos* to benefit from assets seized during security operations or illegally seized property.

91. The information further indicates that some *colectivos* derive resources from illicit economic activities, including extortion, control of informal markets, contraband and illegal mining activities. State tolerance of these groups' involvement in illicit activities within their areas of influence effectively amounts to an indirect form of financial support.

92. The mission has reasonable grounds to believe that the Government has regularly supplied *colectivos* with material support, such as firearms, ammunition, motorcycles, cell phones and radio equipment. In-kind support was instrumental in facilitating the involvement of *colectivos* as repressive hit squads during various cycles of protests.

3. Exercise of delegated State functions

(a) Local governance and public service delivery

93. *Colectivos* have exercised significant influence over local governance structures and access to social benefits. In the areas under their influence, these groups participate in or control the administration of public services, community councils and social assistance programmes. Numerous sources reported that *colectivo* members have access to official databases, population registries and beneficiary lists associated with government programmes. Through these mechanisms, they monitor residents, identify individuals perceived as politically disloyal and influence access to food, fuel, public services and other essential programmes and resources. Their administration of the local committees for supply and production was frequently cited as a key source of local power, enabling *colectivos* to reward political loyalty and profile and sanction perceived opposition.

(b) Intelligence and surveillance

94. *Colectivos* perform intelligence and surveillance functions. Witnesses described systems of community monitoring involving neighbourhood informants, local reporting networks and collaboration with State intelligence services. Information gathered through these networks was allegedly used to facilitate arbitrary arrests, harassment campaigns and targeted repression. In several instances, *colectivos* participated in the identification, location and tracking of individuals sought by security and intelligence services, as occurred during the implementation of Plan Zamora and Operation Tun Tun.

(c) Security and repression, including during election periods

95. *Colectivos* also engaged directly in acts of coercion and violence. The mission received information indicating their participation in the repression of demonstrations through armed patrols, acts of intimidation, unlawful entry into homes, arbitrary detention, assault and other forms of abuse. The use of armed civilian actors allows State authorities to extend their coercive reach while creating a degree of separation between State institutions and the commission of abuses.

96. During periods of political unrest, *colectivos* frequently acted alongside police, military and intelligence personnel. Their participation was well documented during major protest movements, including those in 2014, 2017 and 2019, and during the post-electoral repression of 2024. Sources consistently described armed civilians operating in coordination with State security forces, often arriving simultaneously at protest sites, sharing communications channels and conducting complementary functions during security operations.

(d) De facto authority and informal administration of justice

97. The mission also documented the exercise by *colectivos* of forms of parallel authority and informal justice in areas under their control. Local community members described situations in which individual disputes, commercial activities, access to public resources and community conflicts were subject to resolution by or approval of *colectivo* leaders. In some areas controlled by *colectivos*, State institutions coordinated their activities with those actors, or even delegated some public functions to them. Such practices contributed to the consolidation of a parallel system of governance operating alongside formal State institutions.

4. Human rights impact of *colectivos*

98. The mission has reasonable grounds to believe that *colectivos* have participated in a range of human rights violations and abuses, acting independently, jointly with State security forces or with the acquiescence of State authorities. The mission has documented their involvement in the repression of protests and attacks against real or perceived political opponents, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and other forms of ill-treatment. Cases investigated by the mission include the killing of a student, Paola Ramírez in the 2017 protests in San Cristobal, Táchira State; the 2019 El Junquito massacre, on the outskirts of Caracas; and the kidnappings of human rights defender Inti Rodríguez, in 2014, and of opposition leader Juan Pablo Guanipa, in 2026.

99. The evidence gathered by the mission further confirms that, as part of their involvement in community surveillance, intelligence gathering and the monitoring of political activities, *colectivos* facilitated arbitrary detentions conducted by State authorities, such as by identifying potential targets. *Colectivos* were also directly involved in numerous forms of attacks, harassment and intimidation directed at journalists, members of opposition parties, human rights defenders, civil society actors and perceived dissidents. The activities of these groups contributed to a climate of fear and self-censorship within affected communities.

5. State responsibility and attribution

100. The mission concluded that many *colectivos* were extensively involved in human rights abuses after 2014, affecting the right to life, physical integrity and personal freedom, as well as the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

101. The mission further found that, despite evidence of the involvement of *colectivos* in serious human rights violations, the authorities consistently failed to take action to prevent such abuses and did not conduct prompt, impartial and effective investigations into the allegations. On the contrary, *colectivos* and their leaders received public endorsements from Mr. Maduro; the minister responsible for the interior, Mr. Cabello; and other high-ranking government officials. In so doing, the State failed to uphold its responsibility to protect individuals from human rights violations and to provide effective remedies to victims.

102. Where *colectivos* exercise public authority delegated to them by State actors, or carry out specific operations on the instructions of, or under the direction or control of, State organs, their conduct is attributable to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the resulting violations are internationally wrongful acts of the State itself. Members of *colectivos*, and the State officials who direct, facilitate or knowingly tolerate their conduct, may additionally bear individual criminal responsibility.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

103. **The people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela continue to navigate a period of profound uncertainty. The political developments surrounding the apprehension of the President, Nicolás Maduro, and the role of the United States have reshaped the national context at a time when the country is still grappling with the consequences of serious human rights violations and crimes and the deliberate dismantling of democratic institutions. The devastating earthquakes of 24 June 2026 further exposed existing vulnerabilities, while also revealing the resilience of the Venezuelan people and their commitment to finding common ground in the country's recovery.**

104. **From September 2025 to January 2026, the nature of human rights violations in the country remained consistent with the 2024 post-electoral crackdown, and included arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment, and serious violations of due process guarantees. The political fallout from the attack carried out by the United States on 3 January 2026 resulted in a decrease in the number of long-term detentions and related violations, while other forms of repression endured.**

105. **The situation of hundreds of prisoners arrested for political reasons who remain in arbitrary detention is of serious concern. They continue to be victims of torture and ill-treatment and endure appalling detention conditions. The critical situation at El Rodeo I and Fuerte Guaicaipuro demands immediate attention from authorities.**

106. **The decrease in the harshest forms of repression after January 3 has not, however, been accompanied by the transformational changes required for a sustained improvement in the human rights situation. The measures of political liberalization adopted since that date remain partial, conditional and reversible at best, and the mission is not confident that they represent a genuine and sustainable departure from the State policy of repression, rather than a tactical adjustment. As such, the mission considers that Venezuelans who have fled abroad are still in need of international protection.**

107. **The State's legal and institutional structures that have sustained political persecution and facilitated the commission of gross human rights violations and crimes against humanity have not been dismantled, nor has the interim Government shown any intention of reforming them. The mission is disappointed by the interim Government's appointment of individuals involved in violations and crimes to key positions in the Cabinet, security forces and intelligence bodies, and its failure to dismiss and, when appropriate, prosecute such individuals, a number of whom have previously been identified in the mission's reports.**

108. **The current administration has taken no meaningful steps to advance domestic investigations into gross human rights violations and international crimes committed over the past decade. The withdrawal from the Rome Statute, a decision supported by the United States, appears to further undermine prospects for accountability.**

109. ***Colectivos*** **have become a central component of a broader system of governance through which they enforce political conformity, often by violent means. The mission found numerous instances in which *colectivos* operated upon the instructions, or under the direction or control, of State organs, engaging State responsibility under international law. Irrespective of whether particular acts were attributable to it, the deliberate tolerance of *colectivos* and the impunity from which they benefit are in breach of the State's international human rights obligations.**

B. Recommendations

110. **Past recommendations issued by the mission serve as measurable benchmarks for assessing change in the country's human rights situation. The first conference room paper accompanying the present report provides a compilation of the mission's previous recommendations as well as an assessment of progress, or lack thereof, towards their implementation.**[38]

111. **The mission reiterates its previous recommendations and urges the authorities of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as matter of priority, to:**

(a) **Immediately and unconditionally release all persons arbitrarily deprived of their liberty for political reasons;**

(b) **Publish a verifiable list of persons detained for political reasons, including their places of detention and legal status, and of persons released under the amnesty law or other measures;**

(c) **Systematically review conditions of detention, including access to medical care, across all facilities, to ensure compliance with international standards;**

(d) **Conduct prompt, independent and impartial investigations into crimes against humanity and serious human rights violations, and bring to justice those responsible;**

(e) **Comprehensively reform intelligence and security agencies implicated in human rights violations and international crimes, in keeping with the mission's previous recommendations;**

(f) **Repeal or amend legislation and judicial measures incompatible with international human rights obligations;**

(g) **Ensure independent, transparent and merit-based appointment and tenure processes for judges, prosecutors and senior judicial authorities, consistent with international standards on judicial independence;**

(h) **Develop the conditions under which human rights defenders, journalists and other civil society actors are able to work safely and independently and are able to participate in and have access to decision-making processes, recognizing their vital role in upholding human rights and the rule of law, and cease all forms of censorship and restrictions on freedom of expression, access to information and digital communications that are inconsistent with international human rights law;**

(i) **Adopt, through an inclusive and participatory process, a comprehensive transitional justice framework encompassing recognition of State responsibility for human rights violations, justice and reparation for the victims and guarantees of non-recurrence;**

(j) **Conduct a comprehensive review of the institutional framework enabling, and forms of State support to, *colectivos*, with a view to developing a verifiable plan to ensure that *colectivos* do not commit or contribute to human rights abuses and criminal**

[38] The conference room paper, on detailed conclusions and updates on principle human rights violations, will be available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffmv/index.

acts. This must include the full disarmament and, when required, the dismantling of these groups;

(k) **Ensure that recovery and relief measures responding to the recent earthquakes are grounded in human rights standards;**

(l) **Create and guarantee the conditions necessary for Venezuelans outside of the country to exercise their right to return voluntarily, safely and with dignity;**

(m) **Revoke the country's withdrawal from the Rome Statute, and cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, United Nations human rights mechanisms, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and this mission, ensuring unimpeded access to the country, including to all places of detention.**

112. **Members of the international community, in particular the United States, other influential States and key multilateral actors, as well as business enterprises, should ensure that their policies, actions and engagement do not contribute to, facilitate or otherwise enable human rights violations and international crimes.**

113. **The international community should use all appropriate diplomatic, political and other means to promote comprehensive reforms aimed at ending repression, advancing accountability, dismantling structures that enable abuses, and restoring the rule of law; continue to provide international protection to Venezuelans outside of the country; and strengthen financial and other forms of support to civil society.**