



Human Rights Council
United Nations
Session 19 – March 15, 2012

Statement for the final adoption of UPR recommendations by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Madame President,

We address the Human Rights Council on behalf of CIVICUS and 150 Venezuelan Civil Society Organizations¹.

We appreciate that over 70 countries showed interest in the situation of human rights in Venezuela, and that many among them, together with the OHCHR, brought to light situations of grave concern.

Up to date, the State has not authorized the request to visit Venezuela by 6 UN Mechanisms, nor did it advance in the invitation extended in October 2011 to the High Commissioner to visit Venezuela; as well, it has not authorized the many requests by Venezuela's Rapporteur of the InterAmerican Commission, since 2003.

All recommendations on guarantees for an independent judiciary were rejected, as has happened with the repeated requests by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions to free Judge María Lourdes Afiuni, arbitrarily detained since December 2009.

Since 2005, none of the sentences of the InterAmerican Court of Human Rights has been complied with, most have been declared as "unimplementable" by the Supreme Tribunal of Justice.

The rejection of most of the recommendations on guarantees to freedom of expression and the work of human rights defenders, together with the implementation of laws and practices restrictive of their work and that of Civil Society Organizations, put to doubt the intention of the Venezuelan State to comply with its human rights obligations.

¹ Foro por la Vida (Coalición de 20 organizaciones de derechos humanos), Sinergia (Red de 54 organizaciones de sociedad civil), Redhna (Coalición de 11 organizaciones de derechos humanos de niños, niñas y adolescentes), Observatorio Venezolano por los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres (Coalición de 43 organizaciones de derechos de las mujeres), Císfem, Conapro (Coalición de 4 organizaciones de libertad de expresión), Movimiento por la Calidad del Agua (Coalición de 3 organizaciones ambientalistas), Fundación Agua Clara, Control Ciudadano, Diverlex, Fundación Reflejos de Venezuela, Unión Afirmativa de Venezuela, Observatorio Venezolano de Prisiones, Liberados en Marcha, Una Ventana a la Libertad, Paz Activa, Incosec, Provene, Comisión de Derechos Humanos FCU/UCV, Profesores de Derecho Público UCV, Instituto Prensa y Sociedad, y Transparencia Venezuela.



Madame President and Members of the Council,

The following issues require your urgent attention and your support to the Venezuelan State in order to solve them:

1. The grave situation of violence: in 2011, the homicide rate was over 6 per 10,000 inhabitants²; in prisons, it was 123 per 10,000 inmates³. Therefore, the Venezuelan State should promptly ratify the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture, as recommended by Brazil, and create an effective National Preventive Mechanism.
2. The systematic criminalization of labor and social protests and the prevailing impunity in cases of assassination of union members and extrajudicial executions;
3. Violations and restrictions to the rights of indigenous people, of those in need of international protection and of LGBT persons;
4. The National Plans for the protection of the Rights of Women and those of Children and Adolescents have not been implemented;
5. Even though the State rejected recommendation 95.7, it must formulate the National Human Rights Plan, in accordance with the Vienna Declaration, with the participation of Civil Society Organizations, including those critical of the Government.

We ratify our readiness to hold constructive dialogue with the Venezuelan Government and to work together towards finding solutions to the situations presented.

Thank you, Madame President.

² Observatorio Venezolano de la Violencia – www.observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve

³ Observatorio Venezolano de Prisiones – www.ovprisiones.org