



# CRISIS EN VENEZUELA

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## Acceso a la Justicia - [www.accesoalajusticia.org](http://www.accesoalajusticia.org)

### NGOs raise their voices about Venezuelan crisis before the UNO's Human Rights Council

The situation of Human Rights in Venezuela and Ecuador was in the agenda of the first day of activities, within the 39th period of sessions of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations Organization (ONU), which began on September 10 in Geneva, Switzerland. 84 NGOs (ONGs) attended the encounter, 32 from Ecuador and 52 from Venezuela. Our director, Ali Daniels, and the director of the Human Rights Center of Catholic University "Andrés Bello", Eduardo Trujillo, refuted an Inform on the matter that concerned both nations mentioned, which was presented by Alfred De Zayas -formerly an independent expert for the promotion of international democratic order.

The document by De Zayas, dated December 2017, denies the existence of a humanitarian emergency in Venezuela, vexing 18 international pronouncements produced between July 2016 and August 2018, among them two informs by UNO's High Commissioner for Human Rights. Daniels underlined the worry of NGOs about De Zayas's work, methodologically inconsistent.



Besides, his official visits to Ecuador and Venezuela, in order to study in situ their governmental programs and achievements, occurred in total opacity, respecting the preparation and the stays. All along those processes, information delivered was partial, biased.

The inform was read by the director of Acceso a la Justicia. It warns that "valorizing Human Rights situation in Venezuela and Ecuador must consider the non-fulfillment of requirements, respecting time, transparency, and equilibrium". In addition, Daniels pointed out a lack of balance in the formerly expert's report: 12 pages -out of a total of 15 pages- were on the case Venezuela. Such discrimination is also shown in the six paragraphs of the conclusions: only three lines refer to Ecuador.

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## Transparencia Venezuela - [www.transparencia.org.ve](http://www.transparencia.org.ve)

### "Corruption and impunity are causing deaths in my country"



peace and security". During the session, Mercedes De Freitas, executive director of Transparencia Venezuela, asked for support and protection to venezuelans who escape from the country.

The total lack of autonomy of the public powers; the high grade of opacity; the absence of regulations; and many attempts to control economy -imposed by Venezuelan government along the last years- have generated a fertile field for corruption, certainly the worst ever in Latin America. "The effects are

devastating upon the quality of living", stated the director of the Venezuelan Chapter of Transparencia Internacional.

De Freitas was the only venezuelan to give a speech in the session. She enlisted cases of corruption that have had a big impact on venezuelans' health and food, as well as on public services like electric energy and water.

On September 10, in New York, the United Nations Security Council held a special session named "Venezuela as a case for studying on corruption,

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In the context of the present Venezuela, immerse in a sustained economical and political crisis, the terms “Venezuelan resilience” could be set to describe our citizens’ reality. Day by day, we all go through very tense moments, all sorts of difficulties, and unexpected happenings. We are constantly facing hard situations, such as the departure of relatives and friends, or the death of persons around, or the scarcity of food and medical inputs, or the cash shortage... All of this impede us to get a 100% worthy quality of living. For all these reasons, Venezuela has become a country of resilient people, people who show the best out of themselves when they have to fight adversity; a country where persons are capable of facing the crisis and re-inventing themselves within.

In scenery like this, citizens are obliged to create new forms of activism, new functional modes. Our people innovate to adapt themselves to current changes. Citizens’ participation and sharing information among diverse organism and groups, may favor resiliency via learning, considering joint solutions, and realizing creative innovations. Therefore, citizens must be organized and cohesive; and there must be social networks, spaces for



encountering, and other tools that help strengthen communities.

In CEPAZ we wish to transmit this resilient civic spirit to the entire Venezuelan society, for we believe in our capacity to overcome hostile contexts. Hard we work on identifying opportunities; using our abilities and strengths; and sharpening our wits creatively. Our goal is pushing ahead, towards an optimum living condition, despite the so-called “country situation”. Besides, members as we are of our organized civil society, we have to call out for defending Human Rights, and not allowing the normalization of aggressions against them. An important part of our duties refers to documenting, denouncing, and divulging irregularities. In short: we aim at being a bridge between resilience and human rights, from the civic point of view.

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## Bloque Constitucional

### Judicial corruption and legalization of repression

According to a survey carried out by Global Barometer of Corruption -an instance of the NGO Transparencia Internacional- 74% of venezuelans think that the Judicial Power figures into the most corrupted sectors.

Judicial corruption is associated to “political and social violence”, it is a kind of terrorism that surpasses all limits of legality, to respond only to the State’s repressive strategy. In order to justify repression, the Judiciary provides an outward appearance of legality to support both the planning and the execution of restraining actions.



In fact, coercion and illegitimate persecution due to political reasons or to demands related to human rights, are assumed with partiality by the Attorney General’s Office and the

Judiciary, dedicated just to fulfill the regime’s requirements. Doubtlessly, we are talking about State Terrorism, which is worsened by the cooperation of the Judicial Power. The fundamental rights of every person to life; to be judged by the natural judge; to a due process; to freedom of thinking, expression, association, meeting, and communication; to vote; and to have political parties... They are all endangered. The aim is to undermine all the common values on which a peaceful and democratic spirit lays. Bloque Constitucional de Venezuela struggles against the accomplishment of such intentions.

## Codevida - [www.codevida.org](http://www.codevida.org)

The government sentences millions of persons to irreversible physical and mental damages

Since four years ago, Venezuela is immerse into a big-scale complex humanitarian emergency, with vast and multiple effects at institutional and juridical levels, as well as on civic, political, social, and economical rights. The principle cause of this emergency is a long-lasting context of political unsteadiness, provoked by an authoritarian ruling that, between 2016 and 2017, flew into a final break of the State of Rights and the democratic organisms.

As for the Right to Health, the humanitarian emergency caused the paralysis of most medical attention services in the Public Health Centers still available; the recurrence and fast spread of epidemics that had already been eradicated decades ago; and the extreme exhaustion of inventories of medicines, vaccines, and other basic inputs for preventing and treating adequately illnesses and injuries, including those related to chronic conditions, malnutrition, pregnancy, births, and newborn children.



In 2017, the government eliminated from the list of public purchases medicaments needed by persons with cancer, HIV, transplanted organs, hemophilia, lupus, renal problems, parkinson, multiple sclerosis, pulmonary hypertension, and intestinal inflammation, among other grave conditions. The Pharmaceutical Federation of Venezuela (FEFARVEN) informed that scarcity of products reaches 85%, and also that 70 pharmacies have shut down. This has caused death to many patients with chronic health conditions, and other 300.000 persons are in danger, since they have not been able to accede medicines and treatments for more than one year.

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## Espacio Público - [www.espaciopublico.org](http://www.espaciopublico.org)

Informing about CLAP-related businessman is prohibited

On September 11, the National Commission of Telecommunications (CONATEL), via the 11th Caracas Court, notified journalist Roberto Deniz Machin, of the website for research journalism Armando.info, that four members of the digital media were prohibited to broadcast information about a businessman, Alex Nain Saab. That is a clear case of previous censorship, respecting the case of irregular imports of food.

“The real novelty is that CONATEL (...) is sending notifications to several electronic mass media and to Internet providers, for warning us not to say anything about the case”, declared Ewald Scharfenberg, a journalist of the website. Both, the decision of the Court and the request from CONATEL, imply the establishment of previous censorship, by this mean avoiding that the matters of public interest may be known. This shapes a



violation of the rights to liberty of expression, and to liberty of information, included in Arts. 57 and 58 of the National Constitution.

In addition, the restriction of publishing information that could go “against the honor and reputation” of Nain Saab, is set in very vague terms, subjects of eventual discretionary interpretations; and these might jeopardize the journalists as well as the social communication media, also affecting society, that is deprived from that information.

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## CIVILIS Derechos Humanos - [www.civilisac.org](http://www.civilisac.org)

“Persons who defend Human Rights are essential actors in the search for Justice and in recuperating Democracy”



Marianna Romero is a lawyer who graduated at Catholic University “Andrés Bello” (UCAB). She also is a professor and a researcher in UCAB’s Center for Human Rights (CDH-UCAB) and a Human Rights defender. Since she was very young, she got involved in demanding respect and

guarantees in favor of the most vulnerable persons. She assisted persons arrested and tortured, victims of repression during pacific protests. Presently, she follows up cases and situations that incidence or concern international systems of protection to Human Rights. Besides, she trains, advises, and assists defenders in risk.

Along her professional development, Marianna Romero has addressed her efforts to protect effectively all persons who act as HR defenders. She has done so on her

CDH-UCAB platform, and also in diverse national and international organizations. For her, those who defend other people’s rights are essential actors in the search for Justice and in the recuperation of Democracy. It is a constant struggle, guaranteeing Liberty and non-discrimination.

### —How did CDH-UCAB appear?

—The Center for Human Rights of Catholic University “Andrés Bello” was born in October 1999. It was one of the very first initiatives about Human Rights in Venezuela, aiming to realize activities for the formation, extension, and juridical accompaniment. CDH-UCAB works on strengthening democratic institutionalality, as a way to make Human Rights really effective.

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## PROVEA - [www.derechos.org.ve](http://www.derechos.org.ve)

### Maduro uses forced disappearance systematically against his opponents

The case of a 3-year-old child, who was retained for a whole month by the National Command counter Extortion and Kidnapping (CONAS) as a way to oblige his father to give up, has come to ratify PROVEA’s denounce: these actions by the Venezuelan government can be deemed as “State Terrorism”.

An investigation held until July 2018, demonstrates that Nicolás Maduro has used systematically forced disappearance of persons who were detained for political reasons. During his government, at least 135 persons have been kidnapped by Venezuelan authorities, since their relatives and lawyers are not informed where they are in custody; or because they are not taken to a court nor charged with an offence; or they are kept in prison, despite the existence of a warrant for release. 85 out of those 135 victims correspond to the first semester of 2018. Nobody knew their whereabouts for 11 days (average time); and, more specifically, 57 of them were colombians, accused of being



paramilitary by Maduro himself. In June 2018, 15 of all those were released.

Forced disappearance means the arrest, detention, retention, or any other form of privation of freedom, executed by State officials or under their authorization, that is followed by a refusal to recognize the fact, or by the concealment of the persons’s destination or location, which impedes that person’s access to legal protection. State Terrorism means the reiterative use of illegitimate methods by a government, oriented to induce fear or panic into the civil population. The most

recent case: on September 7, Yudeixy Vásquez, the mother of the 3-year-old boy mentioned before, denounced that her small Angelo Vásquez was kidnapped by CONAS on August 2, 2018, as a way to press on the father, First Sgt. of the Bolivarian National Armed Force (FANB), Luis Colón, for him to give back some weapons, supposedly stolen from Fort Tiuna. Vásquez was accompanied by Deputy Delsa Solórzano.

## Defiende Venezuela - [www.defiendevenezuela.org](http://www.defiendevenezuela.org)

### Venezuela's crisis before the eyes of the world

On September 10, 2018, in Geneva, Switzerland, the 39th session of United Nations' Commission on Human Rights began. Over 80 NGOs questioned a very partial inform that denies the existence of a humanitarian emergency in Venezuela, which was presented by Alfred De Zayas. Until April 30, De Zayas performed as an independent expert for promoting a democratic and equal international order within UNO; and he visited our country in November 2017 for verifying denounces made on shortages of medicines and food. Defiende Venezuela rejects his biased report for not reflecting reality.

In turn, in New York, during a session of UNO's Security Council, under the presidency of USA's ambassador, Nikki Haley, they discussed about corruption and how



it has degraded Venezuelan institutions. In her speech, Haley mentioned Venezuela and underlined her country's "additional efforts to guarantee that our sanctions are addressed to Maduro's regime directly, not to Venezuelan people. Something must be definitely wrong, when the citizens of a country so rich in oil have to go begging on Colombian streets, in order to feed

their children. That something is corruption within the Maduro's regime. This is a man-created crisis", she commented.

Defiende Venezuela supported Mercedes De Freitas, head of Transparencia Venezuela. She pointed out that Nicolás Maduro's government has implemented a thing to be named Kleptocracy in our country. "Autonomy and independence of Public Powers have been annulled. The Supreme Court of Justice has acted as an active accomplice, always legalizing opacity and theft. The Judiciary in Venezuela serves to a political partiality. Meet and get to know the case of deputy Juan Requesens, then say whether Venezuela is a State of Rights... or not!", she expressed.

## Foro Penal - [www.foropenal.com](http://www.foropenal.com)

### 810 civilians before Military Courts in Venezuela

By September 14, 2018, Foro Penal has registered 12.474 arbitrary arrests, occurred in our country since January 1st, 2014.

810 civilians have been presented before Military Courts. Between January 2014 and the present day, we have accumulated 1.548 certified political prisoners. Full liberty, or release under diverse modalities have been obtained in 1.314 cases.

By April 2014, we had 117 political prisoners. Today, the figure for this type of inmates is 234, which has been certified by OAS (OEA), based on data provided by Foro Penal. Besides, 7.338 persons are still unfairly submitted to penal processes, under caution measures.

