

Un Mundo Sin Mordaza - www.sinmordaza.org

Open letter to President Alberto Fernández rejecting the withdrawal of Argentina from the complaint filed against Venezuela before the ICC

Un Mundo Sin Mordaza and Latin American civil society organizations delivered a letter to President Alberto Fernández on June 4th, 2021 expressing their rejection for the withdrawal of the Republic of Argentina from the complaint filed against the regime in Venezuela before the International Criminal Court (ICC) so that it investigates the alleged crimes against humanity, and they requested to reconsider its position.

In September 2018, the governments of Canada, Colombia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, and Argentina, then presided by Mauricio Macri, requested the ICC Prosecutor's Office, with its headquarters at The Hague, to investigate alleged crimes against humanity committed by the regime in Venezuela.

The signing organizations expressed in the letter that "Given the historical legacy of Argentina, withdrawing the remittal on behalf of its government before the ICC regarding the situation of human rights violations in Venezuela constitutes a setback in the fight against the



impunity of crimes against humanity, upon which the ICC Prosecutor's Office has already pointed out that there are sufficient grounds to believe that they have been committed. Besides, the measure worsens the situation of defenselessness of the victims of extrajudicial executions, tortures, forced disappearances, and other international crimes recognized in the Rome Statute committed by the Venezuelan dictatorship".

The communication addressed to President Fernández emphasizes the evident contradiction of the recent measure adopted by his government and the legacy left by Argentine society as a whole in judging crimes against humanity of the dictatorship of Jorge Rafael Videla and the Military Juntas in 1985: "After the trial of the Military Juntas in 1985, Argentina left a precedent for all Latin America, clearly stating that those who were the most responsible for the atrocious crimes in the region cannot enjoy impunity under no circumstances whatsoever", assures the letter.

PROVEA - www.provea.org

Venezuela before the ICC

The International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor's Office must decide in the next few days if the Preliminary Exam that is currently being performed on our country, which analyzes the possibility of the commission of crimes against humanity in Venezuela as of 2014, gives way to a concrete investigation or if it'll be dismissed. The Prosecutor General Fatou Bensouda announced towards the end of 2020 that she would make a decision about this before culminating her term in office. Karim Khan, who has been selected as the new ICC Prosecutor General will assume office towards the end of June.



If the ICC opens a formal investigation on Venezuela, it would be a historic event. The courage of the victims would be vindicated, who, in spite of all the obstacles and threats, would have the possibility of obtaining justice through the international protection mechanisms.

This Prosecutor's Office at The Hague has received information of denunciations of political persecutions, extrajudicial executions, tortures, forced disappearances, and sexual abuses. The ICC criminally investigates individual responsibilities, unlike other entities that elucidate state responsibility. In this stage, should it occur, the victims' role will still be a key factor.

Transparencia Venezuela - www.transparencia.org.ve

Government accelerates indebtedness behind citizens' backs

The 2021 Indebtedness Special Act was published with six months delay, which regulates the limits of indebtedness and the public credit operations that Nicolás Maduro's administration can make during the current year.

In October 2020, the questioned National Constituent Assembly, usurping functions of the Parliament, passed the Indebtedness Act for the 2021 Fiscal Year, but it wasn't until April of this year that the government gave a green light for the National Printing Office to publish the Extraordinary Official Gazette N° 6.589 and both the authorized amount and other details were made known.

According to the Presidential Decree, this year the National Executive Power can award projects, honor



public debt services, restructure or refinance commitments, and cover needs of the Treasury for up to 2,453.27 trillion bolivars, equal to 4,726.17 million dollars, depending on the exchange rate at the date the gazette was issued. The figure is 118% higher than the previous year.

In spite that the 2021 Indebtedness Special Act was published in the Official Gazette, Venezuelans still don't know key data on this instrument, which favors discretion and makes citizen oversight difficult.

[Read more in spanish here](#) 

Foro Penal - www.foropenal.com

Dialogue or negotiations must demand the absolute cease to political persecution and imprisonment

As of June 4th, 2021 Foro Penal recorded 15,734 arbitrary arrests in Venezuela since January 1st, 2014. 872 civilians have been presented before military courts. Up to this date we have accrued a historical number of 3,615 political prisoners, of which 3,316 have been released under different modalities.

As of April 2014 we recorded 117 political prisoners in the country. As of June 4th, 2021 the number is 299 people, out of which 21 are women. Additionally, 9,386 people were or are being unjustly subjected to criminal procedures under cautionary measures.

We at Foro Penal insist on that any political dialogue process involving the fate of people who have been detained or persecuted for political reasons must demand, as a preliminary point, the definitive and absolute cease of political persecution and imprisonment,



as well as offering due guarantees that this will not repeat itself. Those who are politically persecuted and imprisoned are human beings, not bargaining chips in political negotiation tables and they must be treated as such human beings. On the other hand, we demand that the political factors that will eventually be involved in these negotiations respect the technical criteria that are accepted on an international level, establishing who can or cannot be detained as political persecuted and prisoners, without including within their considerations those people who cannot be validly qualified as such. Foro Penal is at the disposal of any factor that, with good will, wishes to rely on our experience, knowledge and methodology for achieving the absolute cease of imprisonment and persecution for political reasons in Venezuela, as well as putting an end to human rights violations in our country.



Acceso a la Justicia - www.accesoalajusticia.org

Nicolás Maduro's regime doesn't inform the UN about Judge Afiuni and judicial independence

«Silence lends assent». At least this is the conclusion reached upon knowing that the National Executive Power hasn't responded to the information petitions made by the United Nations (UN) in order to know of the situation of the suspended Judge María Lourdes Afiuni. On January 25th, 2020, Diego García-Sayán, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of magistrates and attorneys; Taleng Mofokeng, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; and Mary Lawlor, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, sent a letter to the Venezuelan State in which they required an explanation on how Afiuni was declared guilty of «proper corruption» in 2019 if in the trial «the element of the type regarding the benefit obtained hadn't been confirmed».



Detentions. The crime of corruption requires, according to the Anti Corruption Act, that a benefit should exist for the alleged corrupt. Likewise, the three rapporteurs wanted to know if Afiuni was removed from her position by the Supreme Court of Justice complying with due process and which measures has Maduro's regime adopted for «guaranteeing her physical and mental integrity», due to the health problems she suffers.

In other words, the experts want to know how Judge Manuel Antonio Bognanno condemned Afiuni if the Office of the Prosecutor didn't prove throughout the trial that she had received any money or benefit whatsoever for releasing the banker Eligio Cedeño on probation in 2009, a decision adopted by the judge obeying an instruction of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary

process and which measures has Maduro's regime adopted for «guaranteeing her physical and mental integrity», due to the health problems she suffers. The UN Rapporteurs gave Venezuelan authorities sixty days to respond to their questions. However, over a year later the only thing they've obtained has been a shameful silence, something that isn't new. Acceso a la Justicia reviewed the Human Rights Council's website and observed that out of the eleven information petitions made by the different UN rapporteurs and mechanisms to the Venezuelan Executive Power in 2020, only one has been responded.

Read more in spanish here 



Defiende Venezuela - www.defiendevenezuela.org

Spain turns its back to the rescue of democracy and Rule of Law in Venezuela

On Wednesday June 2nd, 2021, the Constitutional Court in Spain closed the case known as "Delcygate", and in a definitive manner, which investigated the stay of the Vice-President of Nicolás Maduro's regime, Delcy Rodríguez, at the Barajas Airport in Madrid on January 20th, 2020, and her encounter with the Spanish Minister of Public Works, José Luis Ábalos.



her mysterious presence in Barajas and if the Spanish Government has breached the penalizing regime hanging over the Venezuelan government official.

Since Vice-President Delcy Rodríguez is a person sanctioned by the European Union, she cannot enter the countries of that region, but after the decision of the Spanish courts, we may never know the truth about

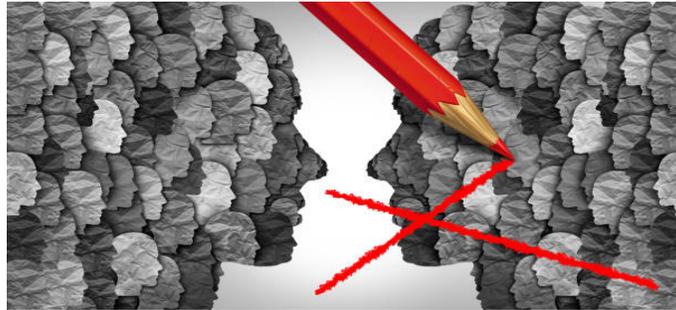
Even though this event can be considered as a minor element within the framework of the humanitarian tragedy and the human rights violations happening in Venezuela, it's an example that politics prevail over the interests of truth and justice, inescapably affecting the credibility of the Spanish Government as a representative and ally in the rescue of democracy and the Rule of Law in Venezuela.

CEPAZ - www.cepaz.org

The institutionality of the State in Venezuela is an instrument to persecute civil society organizations



On May 26th, the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) held an event called «The fall of civil society in Venezuela: working for a peaceful change facing depression», a discussion on the implications of the Administrative Ruling



Romero, there are adverse conditions that surround and condition the context in which the human rights organizations have to work, as well as humanitarian organizations «and in general, any individual, any citizen who makes a demand of their rights».

002-2021, as well as other efforts made by Nicolás Maduro's regime to repress civil society in midst of the political crisis. In the event participated Beatriz Borges, Director of the Centro de Justicia y Paz (Cepaz); Mariana Romero, Director of the Centro para los Defensores y la Justicia; and Marino Alvarado, member of the Advisory Council of the Programa Venezolano Educación Acción en Derechos Humanos (Provea). Geoff Ramsey was the moderator, who is the WOLA Director for Venezuela.

In Beatriz Borges' opinion, the repression against civil society isn't an isolated event, but it's rather within the framework of the systematic application of persecution and criminalization patterns against the organizations that affect their operation. There's a policy of restriction of civic space and of persecution, specifically towards organizations linked to the defense of human rights and humanitarian action. Restrictive legislations have been generated to that effect. Administrative Ruling 002-021 and any measure that intends to hinder the work of organizations in Venezuela must be repealed. For Mariana

Romero added that Public Powers as a whole in Venezuela answer to the National Executive Power. Under the guidelines of the doctrine of national security and the logic of the internal enemy, the main governmental authorities take part in not investigating the restrictions and violations that occur within the framework of the demand and defense of rights, whether by action or omission. On his part, Marino Alvarado affirmed that the organizations are completely unprotected in Venezuela, unlike other countries where they can recur to the justice system. For Alvarado «if this restrictive legislation keeps advancing, and the attacks against organizations persist, it's possible that many of them will disappear, resulting in the reduction of the population to be tended».

Read more in spanish here 

