



CRISIS EN VENEZUELA

Bulletin No. 189

From June 28 to July 5, 2021

www.crisisenvenezuela.com



Acceso a la Justicia - www.accesoalajusticia.org

2020 annual report: Maduro's government used COVID-19 to reinforce its control on the country

2020 will go down in history as the year in which the world stood still due to a disease originated from the Asian continent. Venezuela didn't escape this reality, but the sanitary crisis was taken advantage of by Nicolás Maduro's government to reinforce the control it exercises on the country and to attack sectors that, up until now, have been out of his reach, such as non-governmental organizations.



imposed or for protesting against the deficient public services, being the gasoline shortage among them. The Programa Venezolano de Educación-Acción en Derechos Humanos (Provea) accounted 628 detention cases solely in protests.

In our 2020 annual report *La consolidación de un régimen autoritario en Venezuela: sin parlamento ni derecho al voto* [The consolidation of an authoritarian regime in Venezuela: Without Parliament or the right to vote], we expressed that during the pandemic, the situation of repression and arbitrariness of the country was worsened in an important manner, due to the fact that a state of alarm was decreed that in reality implied a state of siege, which made going from one municipality to another very difficult, even within the same city. Since Maduro's regime imposed the state of alarm because of the pandemic, dozens of people have been detained throughout the country for violating the restrictions

Towards the end of 2020, and barely in a matter of weeks, authorities adopted a series of measures destined to narrowing the fence that had been raised for several years around the NGOs, that comprise one of the few sectors that they still don't control, forcing the humanitarian character international organizations to register in a special registry in order to work in the country and the banks to supervise the financial activities of the Venezuelan organizations. Therefore, instead of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic and designing an effective vaccination plan, Maduro's regime has seized the opportunity to reinforce the control exercised on the citizens.

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Bloque Constitucional - www.bloqueconstitucional.com

Obtaining a gas cylinder in Venezuela has become an act that violates human rights

Not everyone in Venezuela has installation systems for receiving domestic gas directly to their homes, the great majority must acquire gas cylinders, but in these last few years that possibility has become an endless wander for the immense majority of Venezuelans that spend many hours and even days standing in line to obtain the service and take it to their homes in order to prepare their meals.



pay, even in dollars, outrageous sums and inaccessible to many, consequently, it's pointless that the country is the eighth in the world, and the first in Latin America, with the largest natural gas reserves, if the State-owned company in charge of its distribution doesn't have the capacity of offering such service.

This public service is carried out by affiliated companies of Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. [PDVSA by its Spanish acronym] called PDVSA Gas Comunal (LGP - liquefied petroleum gas) and PDVSA Gas (methane gas), but these companies, like the rest of the public sector, are in ruins. This has condemned millions of Venezuelans to

These difficulties for accessing domestic gas service aren't precisely typical of a country with such reserves, and they represent a clear and flagrant violation of the right set forth in Article 82 of the Venezuelan Constitution that stipulates that every person has the right to appropriate, safe, comfortable, and hygienic housing with essential basic services, which aren't only limited, but also undercut more and more with greater impunity.

Comisión para los Derechos Humanos y la Ciudadanía - www.codehciu.org

There were 30 potentially illicit deaths in the State of Bolivar between January and May

The Comisión para los Derechos Humanos y la Ciudadanía (Codehciu) alerted about new cases of the violation of the right to life in the State of Bolivar in its monitoring of extrajudicial executions or potentially illicit deaths. The monitoring performed on regional communication media and social networks recorded that between April and May there were 13 victims of presumed executions by the hands of law enforcement entities.



authority that caused victims in both months was the Police of the State of Bolivar [PEB by its Spanish acronym] that had 2. Between January and May 2021 Codehciu has accounted for 30 victims of this crime, and 17 during the first quarter of the year. Among the executed people there are 2 men murdered by irregular groups in

According to the records, the Criminal and Scientific Investigation Bureau [CICPC by its Spanish initials] was the executing body that leads the list with 8 victims (the highest number). During this same period, the Special Actions Forces [FAES by its Spanish acronym] and the Bolivarian National Guard [GNB by its Spanish initials] recorded 1 and 2 victims, respectively. And the only state

March of this year. Last year Codehciu recorded 208 presumed extrajudicial executions in the State of Bolivar. The organization keeps urging the Venezuelan State to develop education policies for law enforcement officers and to guarantee the lives of the people who are imprisoned. On the other hand, relatives of the victims deserve answers and an unbiased investigation so that these events will not repeat themselves.

Transparencia Venezuela - www.transparencia.org.ve

Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. bribes dominate investigations in Texas, Connecticut, Arizona, and the District of Columbia

The illicit payments to officers of the national petroleum company, Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. [PDVSA by its Spanish acronym] in order to facilitate proceedings and access to million dollar contracts with this State-owned company represent most of the cases that have been investigated in four US jurisdictions, more specifically in Texas, Connecticut, Arizona, and the District of Columbia.



heard in Florida, that are added to the 12 procedures that are well underway in New York, while the rest of the jurisdictions complete the record of 39 conspiracies investigated throughout the entire US, according to records of Transparencia Venezuela up to May 2021: 6 cases in Texas, 1 cause of action in Connecticut, 1 in Arizona, and 3 in the District of Columbia.

The United States is the most affected country in the Americas by corruption coming from Venezuela, because the dirty money penetrated its financial system and its real-estate market since the beginning of the self-proclaimed revolution. Additionally, they're cases that involve connections with European countries, especially Spain, Switzerland or the United Kingdom.

In the 3 cases well underway in the District of Columbia (Washington) there are already 4 people convicted and 1 fugitive; in the cause of action heard in Connecticut there are 3 people convicted, while in Arizona there's 1 case with 2 convictions and 1 fugitive. Texas, the jurisdiction with the most causes of action (6 in total), has 16 convictions, 8 people pending convictions, and 6 people declared as fugitives.

The analysis of the judicial procedures in the US is complex, but starting from the revision of open information from official sources, an approach can be established. Thus, at least 16 causes of action are being

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Defiende Venezuela - www.defiendevenezuela.org



The UNHCHR presented an update on the situation in Venezuela

The report that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), Michelle Bachelet, presented to the Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in Venezuela was made public on July 1st, 2021. Information is gathered there from June 1st, 2020 to April 30th, 2021, and it focuses on the latest events related to the Rule of Law and civic space, as well as the implementation of the recommendations made by her office.



including state and municipal police, and the Criminal and Scientific Investigation Bureau [CICPC by its Spanish initials].

On the other hand, the office of the High Commissioner kept receiving credible denouncements of torture or cruel, inhuman and/or demeaning treatments, such as beatings, electric shocks, sexual violence, and rape threats, among others. She pointed out that she has no knowledge of any action taken by the National Commission for the Prevention of Torture between June 1st, 2020 and April 30th, 2021.

During that period, the UNHCHR documented 17 presumed extrajudicial executions, 12 of them committed after illegal raids in which law enforcement agents used violence, including gender violence, for controlling witnesses and separating the victims from their relatives. However, the UNHCHR indicated a lower number of denouncements of extrajudicial executions attributed to the Special Actions Forces [FAES by its Spanish acronym] since September 2020, but a higher figure attributed to other law enforcement agencies,

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Acción Solidaria - www.accionsolidaria.info



Hate speeches promote crimes against LGBTQI+ people in Venezuela

Here at Acción Solidaria we reject the discrimination that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersex people suffer on a daily basis in Venezuela. 3 sexually diverse people were murdered in Caracas in less than 24 hours during the second week of June. Later, on July 1st, news regarding the homicide of a lesbian couple in the State of Aragua was broadcasted that, apparently, meets the characteristics of a hate crime.



communication media and the prejudices faced by the LGBTQI+ communities, hate speeches from society are what perpetuate this violence.

Structural violence, mainly coming from the State, compromises the lives of these communities declared as vulnerable. But the stigmas surrounding sexually diverse people must be taken down by civil society, only then can we create and guarantee safe spaces for everyone; promote an integral sex education from early childhood; demand everyone's right to form the family they desire and whenever they choose to do so; include all the identities in work and learning environments, and above all, promote empathy and respect everywhere.

Even though there are no recent or official records, the NGO Unión Afirmativa assures that in 2017 Venezuela ranked in fourth place of countries where transgender people were murdered the most, and that up to 2020, 14 victims were accounted in the country. But, besides the lack of visibility in

CEPAZ - www.cepaz.org

Venezuelan civil society organizations report on recommendations of the UNHCHR

On October 3rd, 2018, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted Resolution A/HRC/RES/39/1 in which it requested the High Commissioner to prepare an exhaustive written report on the human rights situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. On July 4th, 2019, Michelle Bachelet, acting as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) issued the report A/HRC/41/18 wherein she presented 23 recommendations to the Venezuelan State in matters of: a) Arbitrary Detentions, b) Torture and Executions, c) Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights (ESCR), d) Women, e) Persecution, f) Indigenous People, g) Justice, h) Imprisoned, i) Civil Society Organizations - Defenders, j) Freedom of Speech. In September 2020, the UNHCHR presented two oral updates on the human rights situation in the country, and made public a second report on the independence of the justice system and access to justice, including economic and social rights violations, and the human rights situation in the Orinoco Mining Arc region, followed by a third report referring to denunciations of possible violations of the rights to life, liberty, and physical integrity. In the first quarter of 2021, the UNHCHR performed a third oral monitoring update, mentioning new elements on human rights violations and reaffirming the violations that keep happening.



In this regard, Venezuelan civil society organizations prepared a report to assess the compliance of the UNHCHR recommendations of the Venezuelan State to improve the human rights situation as of the data and experiences that the UNHCHR herself has confirmed within the field and the documentation that other international entities and civil society organizations submit. The report establishes that from the 43 recommendations issued by the High Commissioner in 2019, 2020, and 2021, the Venezuelan State hasn't complied with any of them, demonstrating a marked setback in a total of 33 recommendations, especially on those referring to: arbitrary detentions, separation of powers, situation of the mining arc, and economic, social and cultural rights.

The organizations that participated in the investigation consider that the UNHCHR should've taken into account the lapse of time as determining factor of her work, since all the denunciations exposed on July 4th, 2019 supposedly should've been taken into consideration with immediacy. However, this hasn't been the case, and the High Commissioner Bachelet should've let Venezuelan authorities know this.

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Espacio Público - www.espaciopublico.org

Pérez de León Director harasses and threatens a Caraoa Digital reporter

The journalist Miguel Da Silva, from the Caraoa Digital news portal, was verbally harassed, threatened and intimidated by the Director of the Pérez de León Hospital, Zayra Medina, while he was conducting interviews on June 28th.



security staff to keep him locked down in spite of Da Silva offering to leave.

Da Silva was taking testimonies from relatives of a person who had been run over along with other people two days earlier at Sucre Avenue in Catia, by a former officer of the Criminal and Scientific Investigation Bureau [CICPC by its Spanish initials]. Medina denied him the opportunity of exiting the hospital and ordered the

Here at Espacio Público we've documented how officials from different public institutions and entities have used the nature of these places in order to argument that there cannot be any journalism made or information obtained without an official permit, which restricts the citizens' public information access.

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Foro Penal - www.foropenal.com

Preventive detentions became early convictions for political prisoners in Venezuela

As of July 2nd, 2021 Foro Penal recorded 15,745 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 3,625 political prisoners, of which 3,327 have been released under different modalities.

As of April 2014 we recorded 117 political prisoners in the country. As of July 2nd, 2021 the number is 298 people, out of which 22 are women. Additionally, 9,393 people were or are being unjustly subjected to criminal procedures under cautionary measures.



Out of the 298 political prisoners in Venezuela, only 42 have been convicted in unjust criminal procedures and without any evidence. This means that 256 political prisoners, in other words, 85.91%, are arbitrarily kept in preventive detention, violating their right to be treated and considered innocent and their right to be judged in freedom. Out of these political prisoners that still haven't been convicted, 126 (49.21%) have far exceeded the maximum period of time of two years imposed by the Organic Code of Criminal Procedures for preventive imprisonment, thus, arbitrarily converting the criminal procedure into an early conviction. This violates all international standards on the use of preventive detentions, which always has to be exceptional, and the human rights of the accused.

PROVEA - www.provea.org

Communal cities for more social control

In the Communal Cities Bill, Nicolás Maduro's government presents this new political territorial structure as a manner of promoting participation and sovereignty of the people. The reality is that they want to advance in a greater social control based on the philosophy of an internal enemy that has to be monitored, reduced and annihilated.



internal enemy that is none other than those who dissent and demand rights.

No project designed by authoritarianism will leave aside its purpose of controlling and repressing. It doesn't conceive a way of governing different to not

Besides imposing a political territorial organization different to what is established by the Constitution, this manner of organizing the population and state competences cannot be seen isolated from other processes that are in full swing and have as a purpose guaranteeing the minority that holds power to keep governing and consolidating the population's submission. Rules that part from persecuting and annihilating an

maintaining power at whatever the cost while being a minority. In the name of more democracy, its purpose is more authoritarianism and imposing an excluding political project contrary to the Constitution. The communal cities are registered within a broader government project that is to keep dismantling the existent institutionality and to build one at the service, not of the population and development of the country, but of the minority that holds the power to consolidate its dictatorship.

