



# CRISIS EN VENEZUELA

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

### The government hasn't published any of the contracts signed for purchasing anti-COVID-19 vaccines

Venezuelan authorities not only remain silent in regards to the immunization plan against COVID-19 in Venezuela, but also in regards to the contracts for purchasing the vaccines. None of the four agreements signed since December 2020 have been published.

The first agreement was signed with Russia on December 29th, 2020 for 10 million doses of the Sputnik-V vaccines. Up to the third week of July only 1,430,000 doses have arrived, representing 14.3% of the announced contract. According to official spokespersons, the total investment was of US \$200 million. The second agreement was undersigned with COVAX in April of this year. Even though Venezuela officially requested its adhesion to this mechanism in September 2020, in which the World Health Organization participates, almost at the end of the first quadrimester of 2021 it requested to change the contract in order to choose the vaccines and not wait for the allocation according to the availability. The country paid a total of US \$120 million, but it still isn't certain when the



first shipment will arrive or which vaccines will be sent. The amount of doses purchased is enough to vaccinate 20% of the Venezuelan population.

There's not much known of the third and fourth contracts. On June 4th, the Sputnik Russian news agency informed that Venezuela had undersigned a convention with the Geropharm Corporation for the acquisition of EpiVacCorona vaccines; however, the number of doses purchased wasn't specified nor the amount that was committed. The cost for Venezuela to purchase 12 million doses of Abdala, recently approved by Cuba for emergency use, wasn't informed either, and whose signature was known on June 24th.

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

### The wait for the publication of the briefs submitted before the ICC Prosecutor's Office on the situation of Venezuela continues

As of July 30th, 2021 Foro Penal recorded 15,756 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 3,634 political prisoners, of which 3,369 have been released under different modalities.



It's worrying that the month ended and the International Criminal Court Prosecutor, Karim Khan, hasn't complied with the order issued by the Pre-Trial Chamber on July 2nd for publishing the edited versions (in order to protect the victims' identities) of the briefs that have been submitted before that chamber up to this date before

As of April 2014 we recorded 117 political prisoners in the country. As of July 30th, 2021 the number is 265 people, out of which 17 are women. Additionally, 9,406 people were or are being unjustly subjected to criminal procedures under cautionary measures.

July 23rd. The brief dated June 15th, 2021 is especially important, in which the Pre-Trial Chamber itself indicates that it was submitted by Fatou Bensouda at the time, wherein, as textually expressed by the decision, "reiterates that the preliminary exam has concluded" on the "Venezuela I" situation. We keep on waiting.

## Bloque Constitucional - [www.bloqueconstitucional.com](http://www.bloqueconstitucional.com)

### Countries that don't acknowledge Venezuelans' condition as refugees insist on ignoring the denouncements of the OAS and the UN

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) created the Refugee Olympic Team for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro so that athletes under this condition may participate in the event. At that time, 10 athletes integrated the team that increased up to 29 in order to compete in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.



*lives, safety or freedom have been threatened... by generalized violence of human rights”.*

Eldric Samuel Sella Rodríguez, a Venezuelan citizen and a refugee in Trinidad and Tobago since 2018, forms part of this Refugee Olympic Team in the Olympic Games that are currently taking place. Upon finishing his participation he tried to return to Trinidad and Tobago, but the authorities denied his reentry. This is living proof of the evident hostility in the way Venezuelans have been treated who have sought refuge in that country, who insists on denying the protection to Venezuelans who comply with the definition set forth in the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees on the causes of forced mobility: the “persons who have fled their country because their

With this upfront negativity of Trinidad and Tobago that has even cast hundreds of Venezuelans out to sea where they have died after having been denied their entries as refugees, this athlete's case calls for special attention and the fragility of the denouncements made by organizations such as the Organization of American States and the United Nations is also evident, due to the fact that they haven't managed to make an impact in the countries that are reluctant to comply with their community obligations, with which the fate of the democracies get increasingly riskier in the world, while authoritarian regimes seem to be getting stronger. Thus, every four years we see with sad eyes the increasing number of athletes on this team of refugees that resembles a satellite spinning around an orbit where human rights are disrespected more and more each day.

## Acción Solidaria - [www.accionsolidaria.info](http://www.accionsolidaria.info)

### Lack of sensitivity in public entities perpetuates the impunity in gender violence cases

On Friday July 23rd, 2021 the Judge of Control in charge of the Ingris Gomes case dismissed the aggravating circumstance for sexual violence that had been filed by the Prosecutor General's Office. Gomes is a survivor of an attempted femicide by her former partner, Luis Da Silva, who assaulted her in December 2020. In her social media, the young woman denounced being a victim of impunity of the Venezuelan judicial system.



She isn't the only one. For years, defenders and activists for women's rights have been denouncing the lack of information and sensitivity on behalf of officers of the Prosecutor General's Office, which has perpetuated the dismissal of the victims' accounts and, consequently, that less than 5% of the denouncements (according to the NGO) become investigations. The lack of training impedes girls adolescents and women from accessing the

guidance regarding the process and, especially, concerning the protection mechanisms from the State, which are already irregular.

The lack of official records also makes it difficult for justice to be done with gender based violence cases. Even though femicide was included as a crime in the Organic Act of Women's Right to a Violence-Free Life in 2014, the Prosecutor General's Office offered information for the last time in 2015, when it calculated 121 victims for gender reasons in Venezuela. During the first semester of 2021, the Femicides Monitor recorded 116 murders. It's also important to point out that without records or monitoring of cases, public policies cannot be created for the prevention and eradication of all types of violence and for the protection of the survivors.



**PROVEA - [www.provea.org](http://www.provea.org)**

## Human rights committees demand from the Office of the Ombudsman to guarantee the human right to water

The People's Committees for the Defense of Human Rights of the parishes of Caracas (Coche, Jose Felix Ribas, La Dolorita, La Vega, Montalban, Santa Rosalia, and San Pedro) demanded from the Office of the Ombudsman to safeguard the human right to drinking water of the communities of Caracas affected by the constant violation of their right due to interruptions, lack of maintenance and corruption.



COVID-19 pandemic.

According to surveys performed by the Committees, the inhabitants of these communities have denounced the serious situation concerning the sporadic and scarce water supply and its bad quality. They alerted that the lack of water, the

deterioration and collapse of this drinking water service worsens day by day. They added that Venezuela ranks in fourth place among the Latin American and Caribbean nations in which the greatest inequality of access to water is recorded.

The Committees delivered a legal brief to the Office of the Ombudsman wherein they state repeated claims from the inhabitants of different communities of the Metropolitan Area of Caracas who suffer serious problems related to the water distribution system in the city. Furthermore, they alerted that the absence of drinking water seriously affects the exercise of other human rights, such as the right to health, wellbeing, essential basic services, and quality of life in midst of the

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**Un Mundo Sin Mordaza - [www.sinmordaza.org](http://www.sinmordaza.org)**

## Letras de Libertad Magazine: defending freedom of speech

Un Mundo Sin Mordaza, together with Provea, Amnesty International, Espacio Público, Aula Abierta, and Cedice recently created the *Letras de Libertad* [Letters of Freedom] Essay Contest, with the purpose of promoting discussion and academic investigation on the right to freedom of speech making clearly visible the denouncement and defense of society's human rights.



*theory of Karl Popper*”, by its author Sara Fadi.

*Letras de Libertad* comes to exist because Latin America is a region that has been historically affected by totalitarian regimes that threaten freedom of speech and access to information. In these last twenty years, Venezuela has gone through a process of a breakdown of the political, social and economic fabric. According to the *Informe Libertad de Expresión* [Freedom of Speech Report] of Un Mundo Sin Mordaza, 995 freedom of speech violations occurred in Venezuela during 2020.

The 10 best articles, selected by a jury comprised of the allied organizations, are available in the digital magazine *Letras de Libertad*, with the article that won first place among them, being “La importancia de la libertad de expresión como valor necesario para el desarrollo de las sociedades: una visión desde la teoría de la sociedad abierta de Karl Popper” [“The importance of freedom of speech as a necessary value for the development of societies: a vision from the open society

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**CEPAZ - [www.cepaz.org](http://www.cepaz.org)**

## Women who have been victims of gender-based violence face significant gaps for accessing justice in Venezuela

The Venezuelan State's governance in fulfilling its obligation of protecting gender-based violence victims is difficult to assess. But in a fast overview, based on the experience of both the victims and of their legal representatives, would seem to confirm that there are severe structural and procedural deficiencies in the justice system. These generate significant gaps for accessing justice in Venezuela. As for the courts, the question always revolving around this structure is whether or not they are enough. Apparently they aren't. Courts existing in the different judicial circuits definitely don't have the capacity of taking on all the cases that are submitted before them. However, even more than the deficient number of these judicial offices, the problem actually lies on the failures that they face day-to-day for advancing a process of a criminal nature; especially when the victim is a woman.

The Organic Act of Women's Right to a Violence-Free Life, in black and white, is very well adapted to international standards. But several loopholes have been found with its use. Besides, upon the threshold of a second reform this special act has no regulations, which is what allows the efficiency of the programmatic principles found in the law and avoids an individualized



interpretation of these programmatic principles that in the long run is what creates serious vices and obstacles within the system. As long as we have a judicial system that doesn't respond with quality or in a timely manner, women will continue to be victims. In the first place from their aggressor and in the second place from the State, through its justice system. Justice delayed is justice denied. And justice without gender perspective in its actions re-victimizes the victim.

Here at Centro de Justicia y Paz (Cepaz), we consider that the access to justice for women who are victims of gender-based violence in Venezuela is unheeded. Even though there's a legal framework, there are serious structural problems that don't allow the cases to be duly attended, channeled and resolved through the judicial process.

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

## Arrest warrant issued against a nurse for demanding salary improvements

The 3rd Court of Control for the State of Anzoátegui issued an arrest warrant against nurse Ada Macuare on the evening of Monday July 26th, after being accused of "instigating hate" and "terrorism" for demanding salary improvements and vaccines for all the people at the Alí Romero Briceño Outpatient Clinic in Barcelona.

Macuare's defender, Ana Suniaga, denounced a series of violations that occurred in the process: "Her relatives weren't able to see her for 6 days, she

wasn't allowed to call anyone, she wasn't allowed to see or talk to her defense attorneys. The officers arrived to the health center pretending to be patients, they were examined and when they were going to give them the medical prescriptions they slipped away and went to find her at her office, where she was taken out with handcuffs", she informed Espacio Público.

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

### Nicolás Maduro promises to eliminate protectorates but it advances in establishing the Communal State

“I think that the best is that whoever wins gets the government in their state, in their municipality, and as far as I’m concerned we’re going to eliminate that what we have called the protectorate (...) so that whoever wins, wins. They should govern and that’s it. Let’s see how it goes.” With these words, Nicolás Maduro announced on June 28th the end of a polemic figure not stipulated in the Constitution and that it became a parallel entity of governors and mayors. All in all, the figure of the protectorate is a sort of representative of the National Executive Power for the administration of governorships and municipalities based on the interests of the central power, which doesn’t represent at all the democratic will of the citizens. They’re organizational formulas of a territorial character arbitrarily imposed by the national government with the intention of not acknowledging the victories obtained by the opposition in regional and municipal elections.

Nevertheless, Maduro’s announcement looks like an attempt to convince the opposition in participating in the regional and local mega-elections set for November. The offer seems more like poisoned candy, because while it announces this measure it continues with its attempts in consolidating a parallel State through initiatives such as the Organic Act for Communal Cities. This bill, which the government-biased Parliament [AN by its Spanish initials]



has already approved on its first discussion, creates a social structure that doesn’t exist in the Constitution, called the “communal city”.

Here at Acceso a la Justicia we’ve warned that the proposal, besides contradicting the political territorial decentralization, it

presents itself as a structure provided for dismantling the republican system of the democratic constitutional State, which is based on the principles of constitutional supremacy (Article 7), of legality (Article 137), the division of powers (Article 136), of the responsibility of the State (Article 140), and the recognition and effective validity of human rights (Articles 2 and 19). The communal city seeks to vacate the competences of the states and municipalities, while it would increase and strengthen the centralization of power in the hands of the National Executive Power, as well as social control. We mustn’t forget that the communes, upon which these hypothetical figures are based, are organizations that will be controlled and directed by said Executive Power.

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