



# CRISIS EN VENEZUELA

## Bulletin No. 271

From March 6 to 13, 2023  
[www.crisisenvenezuela.org](http://www.crisisenvenezuela.org)

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

### The 2023 National Budget doesn't have a plan for overcoming the crisis

The 2023 National Budget Act, and its respective Indebtedness Act, set forth incomes for 170 billion bolivars or 9.7 billion US dollars, calculated at the December 30th, 2022 exchange rate. Although it seems like a lot of money, considering that Venezuela has a debt of 160 billion US dollars or upon revising the size of the State and its already existing expenditure commitments, it becomes apparent that such resources are nowhere nearly enough.

The Approval insufficient budgets are perverse practices that Venezuelan authorities resort to in far too many occasions by. Since the authorized amounts fall short, the National Executive Power opts for publishing a number of additional credits throughout the year without any financial accountability regarding their origin and destination. For example, in 2018 and 2019, Transparencia Venezuela determined that the national budget approved was barely 1% of the public expenditure for such periods,



while 99% were additional credits, based on the official gazettes.

Even though the National Budget and Indebtedness Acts haven't been formally published in Venezuela since 2016, Transparencia Venezuela had access to part of said documents of public interest and prepared a summary of the government's plans with Venezuelans' resources, which don't consider any strategies for overcoming the crisis. One of the most relevant points was that the amount established for salaries and wages of the 5,477,571 public officials (4,408,103 of them are members of the military), only covers payments of USD 5.80 per month.

[Read more in spanish here](#) 

## Caleidoscopio Humano - [www.caleidohumano.org](http://www.caleidohumano.org)

### Can Venezuelan pensioners and retirees buy their medications and also have a balanced diet?

An elderly person with a chronic condition can spend over USD 300 on medications, not including costs of consults, exams and food, while pensions don't surpass USD 6 per month. A 71-year-old pensioner, who asked to remain anonymous, informed the following to the Caleidoscopio Humano team: "I wake up every day with great anguish thinking what can I cook in order to make the most my proteins and groceries so they can last longer and I don't run out of anything. I know that I'm an elderly person with chronic illnesses and I should have a more balanced diet, but I do what I can in order to stretch out the money and follow with my treatment too. The money I receive every month doesn't even cover my heart medication, I survive only because my children emigrated and they send me money every month from abroad for my household and medical expenses".



condemns them to a precarious and unassisted old age, regardless of how much they had worked during their productive years.

The non-profit organization Convite disclosed that in September 2022, 92% of the elderly in Venezuela had problems accessing their necessary medications. On the other hand, the Venezuelan Observatory for Food Security and Nutrition [OVSAN by its Spanish acronym], pointed out that pensioners and retirees figure among those who are most affected by malnutrition. The State is responsible for the hundreds of people that grow old under these precarious circumstances and whose economic, social, cultural and environmental rights (ESCR) are being violated.

However, not every elderly person in Venezuela has that privilege. Many of them have to prioritize between eating and taking care of their health in a country that

[Read more in spanish here](#) 



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

### The unconstitutional demand of a sworn affidavit of net assets from NGOs and related organizations

In the avalanche of new bureaucratic proceedings with which the followers of Hugo Chávez's policies [*Chavismo*] pretends to drown civil society organizations, one stands out: the demand of filing a sworn affidavit of net assets before the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic [*CGR by its Spanish initials*]. The obligation set forth in the third numbered paragraph of Article 14 of the polemic project Law on Control, Regularization, Operations and Financing of Non-Governmental and Related Organizations, approved by the Parliament [*AN by its Spanish initials*] on its first discussion on January 24th (hereinafter referred to as the Anti-Society Act), forces "the legal entity, as well as its members, administrators, representatives, workers, and other associates of the non-governmental organization" to report regarding their assets.

At first glance, the pretension seems ludicrous, due to the fact that only civil servants or those managing Venezuelan State resources are legally mandated to report their entire assets and financial position, according to what is set forth in Article 78 of the Organic Act of the Comptroller General and of the National Tax Control



System. To purport imposing this obligation upon private non-profit organizations, as done by the project of the Anti-Society Act, doesn't align to the constitutional and legal framework due to several reasons: the first one is because private civil organizations aren't directly or indirectly related to the Venezuelan State nor do they manage or receive public funds from it.

This imposition would realize a subordination of civil society organizations to the CGR, which undoubtedly is a restriction to their autonomy and to the freedom of association set forth in Article 52 of the Constitution, especially in light of the absolute lack of autonomy of this State authority, whose highest representative hasn't been appointed according to the Constitution either and who, moreover, is a renowned member of the governmental political party.

[Read more in spanish here](#) 



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

### Pro-government Mayor threatened six journalists for covering denouncements

The Mayor of the Municipality of Piar for the State of Bolivar (south), Yulisbeth García, threatened to take legal actions against six journalists who were covering claims made by family members of patients who died at the "Dr. Gervasio Vera Custodio" [*Public*] Hospital during the pandemic, and that were treated by the health center's former director.



the family members, and disclosing and going public with them.

During a protest, the family members demanded the institution to open a formal investigation against the hospital's former director, Yoslen Astudillo, after Jonathan Camacho's detention, for allegedly practicing medicine as an obstetrician-gynecologist and a psychologist at said hospital.

In a local radio program, García accused the six journalists of "applying media terrorism" and of "speculating" by taking statements and demands from

[Read more in spanish here](#) 

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

## Harassments and intimidations against NGOs continue in Venezuela

As of March 10th, 2023 Foro Penal recorded 15,808 arbitrary arrests in Venezuela since January 1st, 2014. 875 civilians have been presented before military courts. Up to this date we have accrued a historical number of 3,713 political prisoners, of which 3,436 have been released under different modalities. The number of political prisoners in the country as of March 10th, 2023 is 277, out of which 17 are women. Additionally, 9,430 people were or are being unjustly subjected to criminal procedures under cautionary measures or alternative formulas for serving the sentence.



also people who are in an extremely vulnerable situation; furthermore, the debate regarding the upcoming approval of the Bill on Control, Regularization, Operations and Financing of Non-Governmental and Related Organizations, closing even more the already narrow legal siege against civil society in Venezuela.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE) publicly manifested their concern regarding these initiatives and made the following petition: “The Commission and its Special Rapporteur call on Venezuela to refrain from adopting legislation and regulations of any kind that arbitrarily restrict the right to freedom of association and freedom of expression and the right to get involved in matters of public interest. The Commission and its Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression further urge the State to take measures aimed at restoring democracy and the Rule of Law.”

Harassments and intimidations against NGOs continue. The recently approved “International Cooperation Act” severely restricts the possibilities for civil society organizations to obtain financing in order to develop their activities that not only benefit victims, but

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

## Venezuela isn't straightened out nor are there any more liberties

The pro-government propaganda with the intention of projecting the idea that they have overcome the serious problems that caused the humanitarian emergency in Venezuela or that they have made headway in their solution, clashes with the everyday reality suffered by the population. High inflation still persists, as well as the serious problems regarding drinking water supply, failures in electric power services, the serious crisis concerning public health attention, and the runoff in the educational area in every respect.



being repeatedly suspended, and physical structures unworthy of staff or users.

The closings of radio stations persist, over 260 political prisoners that haven't been released, police officers and military officers persist in practicing extrajudicial executions, including massacres,

In addition to this, the institutional weakness both by the lack of independence as well as by the inefficient management for giving responses to citizens' requests and claims must be included. For example, a justice system that is unable to lessen procedural delay, hearings

leaving 10 or more murders in each operation without the Prosecutor's Office willing to perform genuine investigations, or an Office of the Ombudsman raising its voice against young people's murders in low-income sectors. The fundamental factors that led to and maintained the Complex Humanitarian Emergency (CHE) haven't disappeared, and the indicators that in Venezuela there isn't a democratic government still exist.

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

## Women's political participation is fundamental for building peace and restoring democracy in Venezuela

Discrimination and inequality that persist and are evidenced in men and women's degree of participation in decision-making spaces, are broadly documented in the low percentages of nominations for female leadership candidacies by political parties during electoral processes and, consequently, in allocating popular election positions, which are mostly held by men. Upon revising the political organizations' by-laws, it's clear that they don't have any express or effective provisions stipulating peer quotas regarding gender. In this sense, nominations issued by political parties in different electoral battles, as well as the parties' internal structure itself demonstrate the lack of will existing within partisan organizations of letting women participate in the country's most important and influential political and public spaces.

This is highlighted by the report *Participación política de las mujeres en Venezuela. Construyendo caminos para la paz y la democracia* [Women's Political Participation in Venezuela. Building Paths towards Peace and Democracy], prepared by the Centro de Justicia y Paz (Cepaz) for Red Electoral Ciudadana (REC) [Citizen's Electoral Network], comprised by Cepaz, the Global Observatory of Communication and Democracy and Voto Joven [Youth Vote]. This report evidences that, in spite of the inclusive public discourse regarding gender equality and women's rights, which is made clearly visible both by the State, main political leaders, and the of political parties' leadership; and also despite resolutions addressing issues regarding the establishment of gender parity criteria in different electoral processes, the figures



actually demonstrate a historic ousting of women from the highest decision-making positions and spaces, or being relegated to less influential positions, or being directly pushed and set aside to social and cultural circles.

In spite of the persisting challenges, it should be pointed out that the advances made nowadays by female leadership in participating in other influential spaces. Firstly, there's an important young political leadership movement in which women have started to occupy spaces, educating and developing themselves for the future. And even though today they can be found in political parties' bases, as well as in communities or organizations, there's a new generation of female leaders that's building the future, occupying more and more public and political spaces, and also taking women's agenda to influential spaces. This new developing female leadership clearly demonstrates that women wish to form part of politics, that these spaces are no strangers to them, and that they have the competences for this. Thus, if nowadays we find ourselves with little participation of women, it's not because they lack any intention, interest or abilities in playing a part in these political spaces, but rather due to other actors' lack of willingness in involving them and establishing a decision-making agenda together with them.

[Read more in spanish here](#) 

