CANDIDACY OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS (2023-2025)

Voluntary Promises and Commitments regarding the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations General Assembly
Resolution A/RES/60/251

INTRODUCTION

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is a Democratic and Social State, of Law and Justice. It has a Political Constitution that has been cataloged as one of the most advanced at an universal level. The Magna Carta of Venezuela fully guarantees Human Rights and through its participatory, protagonic and trustworthy democracy, promotes the broadest and most plural debate of ideas for decision-making by the Bolivarian Government, which has been implementing policies to achieve the full exercise of the human rights. In this way, the Venezuelan State promotes, in its national legislation and in practice, the respect, promotion and comprehensive conception that Human Rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

In this regard, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela positively values the creation of the Human Rights Council (HRC) and, within its institutionality, the mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Venezuela has been examined in its first three cycles, on October 7, 2011; on November 1, 2016 and; on January 25, 2022 in exercises that were carried out in a broad, plural and continuous manner. In the last cycle, a total of 328 recommendations were received, with 221 being accepted, representing more than 70%, which shows the great importance that our country attaches to the proposals made by the member States of the United Nations in favor of the promotion and protection of human rights, emphasizing that all accepted recommendations will be incorporated into the National Human Rights Plan and will form a fundamental part of the follow-up that the Venezuelan State will carry out in terms of promotion and protection, and enjoyment of Human Rights.

The UPR for Venezuela has a profoundly popular character, positioning all Human Rights, becoming a transversal axis of public policies, and in permanent evaluation and questioning of the people for their respect, promotion and realization.

In the preparation of the UPR National Reports, an inter- and intra-institutional working group was formed, made up of all the bodies of the Public Authorities. This process led to a broad social consultation, which gave rise to permanent instances of training in Human Rights at the national level, with the participation of organizations, social movements, community councils and non-governmental organizations.

In similar manner, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has made big steps in terms of development and quality of life, despite the negative impact of the 502 unilateral coercive measures imposed on our country that affect our development model, since, in recent years, poverty and inequalities have been reduced in Venezuela. In our national model, public policies are being implemented aimed at eradicating poverty under the principles of universality, gratuity, equality, inclusion,
solidarity, equity and social justice, which have forcefully outlined the programs developed to dignify children and adolescents, women, people with disabilities, older adults, diverse genders, Afro-descendants, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable sectors.

In this context, the Venezuelan State, is inserted in the international trend that constitutionally recognizes the rights of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, as specific and original rights, incorporating the multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual character that characterizes us as a society, developing a true system of protection of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples that recognizes and values the contributions of aboriginal and Afro-Venezuelan identity in the formation of our identity and its basic social institutions. This system is complemented by mechanisms for political, inclusive, leading and co-responsible participation at all levels of the Venezuelan society, which guarantee the permanent representation of indigenous peoples, including in all parliamentary and legislative branches of the country.

Venezuela, as a member state of the Rights Council, has played a leading and effective role in the institutional strengthening of this body, with proposals aimed at its consolidation as a genuine space for dialogue, frank and transparent cooperation. With this position, the aim is to avoid the political, selective, biased use of double standards and subjectivity, which led to the disappearance of the Human Rights Commission, which fundamentally served to act in a politically motivated manner against those countries that defended their sovereignty and their right to self-determination, and that were making serious efforts to guarantee, respect, promotion and fulfillment of all Human Rights, including the rights of the peoples, particularly international solidarity, peace and development, in their legitimate aspiration to achieve a truly democratic and equitable international order, in favor of the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, including the Right to Development.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela considers that the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council play an important role in the Universal System for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Venezuela is open to genuine and constructive dialogue with the Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts, Special Representatives, Working Groups and the thematic Special Procedures that have impartiality and objectivity as a principle, and not coercion or exceedances in the exercise of mandates granted by the States, being fully framed in the Human Rights Council Resolutions 5/1 and 5/2.

Our country positively values the great work they carry out, as well as the cooperation they provide to help solve deficiencies or difficult situations in the promotion and protection of human rights, as the cases may be, with full respect for the sovereignty and independence of State.

Venezuela stands out for being a State Party to the vast majority of international instruments on Human Rights, which shows an unequivocal conviction in their respect, promotion and protection. Among these instruments are:

2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
3. The First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.


5. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

6. The Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.


8. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.


12. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

13. The International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In compliance with its international obligations, the Venezuelan State periodically presents before the different bodies created in accordance with the content of the signed treaties, (The Committees) the due reports on the implementation and observance of the postulates established in the two main International Covenants, as well as what is enshrined in the different Conventions and their respective Protocols on Human Rights.

In this regard, Venezuela has contributed to the recognition of the Latin American and Caribbean Region as a Zone of Peace, without weapons of mass destruction, and to the promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for the sovereignty of States and the right to self-determination of peoples, fighting for the disappearance of the danger of war and the threat of force, and against interference in the internal affairs of States, principles that are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

In April 2014, the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro Moros, through the Decree No. 876, published in the Official Gazette No. 40,386, created the National Human Rights Council (NHRC), in order to strengthen the public policy as a transversal axis of the Venezuelan State in terms of Human Rights. This instance was established for the coordination of the broad existing institutions responsible for the guarantees, promotion, protection, respect and realization of Human Rights, as well as for the support and promotion of the State's public policies.
aimed at guaranteeing the free exercise of Human Rights of all persons subject to the jurisdiction of the Venezuelan State, with special emphasis on groups with greater vulnerability and social risk; to systematize progress; follow up on the fulfillment of the commitments acquired nationally and internationally; early detection of challenges; and promote the necessary efforts to strengthen actions in the area of human rights.

The NHRC led the inter-institutional, participatory and inclusive mechanism in charge of monitoring the implementation of the UPR recommendations and the development of the consultation process for the preparation of the third national report.

Under the leadership of the NHRC, the National Human Rights Plan (NHRP) 2016-2019 was established. A strategic document intended to guide the policy of the Venezuelan State to consolidate the achievements made in the area of Human Rights and to continue advancing until overcoming the pending challenges in this matter. In 2016, 545 indicators were designed to monitor the plan. The projects, actions and resources necessary for their implementation were incorporated into the respective operating plans of the bodies of the Public Powers of the State. In 2020, an inclusive evaluation was carried out on compliance with the PNDH, determining that 93% of the 213 actions of the Plan were fully or partially implemented.

In September 2019, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights signed a Letter of Understanding, in order to establish the presence of OHCHR officials in the country for the development of an agenda of cooperation and technical assistance. The Letter of Understanding was renewed and expanded in 2020 and 2021.

Nowadays, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has received the visit of two special procedures of the Human Rights Council, namely: the Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order and the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures in the enjoyment of human rights. Venezuela invited the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development to visit the country, as well as four mandate holders, namely: 1. Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing; 2. Special Rapporteur on the right to food; 3. Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related forms of intolerance, and 4. Independent Expert on the consequences of foreign debt and international financial obligations on the full enjoyment of Human Rights. Additionally, a response has been provided to the urgent appeals and requests for information sent by the special procedures.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, attached to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and committed to the Universal System for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, pleases in sharing below its promises and voluntary commitments in the face of the candidacy to be a member of the Human Rights Council for the period 2023-2025, in accordance with the International Treaties and Agreements validly signed by the State, as well as with the national "Plan de la Patria" (Homeland Plan/Economic and Social Development Plan) 2019-2025.
IN THE NATIONAL LEVEL

- Continue to guarantee the Human Rights of the population, despite the 502 unilateral coercive measures applied against the country.

- Maintain and Consolidate the Right to Peace, strengthen suffrage as a way to resolve differences and deepen the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Process, to continue advancing in the full realization of all Human Rights.

- Strengthen coordination between the various institutions responsible for the promotion, protection and realization of Human Rights, together with the improvement of the channels of dialogue with Venezuelan society.

- Continue to incorporate the historically excluded sectors in the full enjoyment of Human Rights, based on respect for equality and non-discrimination.

- Continue to strengthen the State institutions in charge of the justice system in order to guarantee the right of every person to free, accessible, impartial, suitable, transparent, autonomous, independent, responsible, equitable and expeditious justice, without undue delay, without useless formalisms or replacements.

- Undertake a comprehensive review of the current legal framework on the prevention of torture and strengthen the National Commission for the Prevention of Torture.

- Implement a national follow-up mechanism for the accepted recommendations of the International System for the Protection of Human Rights.

- Continue to expand the debate on legislative development, with a view to adopting rules to expand and strengthen Human Rights in the country.


- Continue to strengthen the full exercise of the Human Right to freedom of opinion and expression, as well as the guarantee of the rights of association, assembly and peaceful demonstration.

- Continue to work on the training program for public servants in the field of Human Rights, in order to continue strengthening national capacities.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

- Continue to cooperate with the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, its mechanisms and Special Procedures of the Universal System for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is committed to deepening cooperation, particularly with the Council, in order to consolidate it as a transparent, efficient, objective and faithful body to the true principles that
serve as a basis to help promote the Promotion and Protection of all Human Rights, including the Right to Development, and also commits to providing broader access to United Nations Special Rapporteurs and Independent Experts.

- Contribute with the international initiatives for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights through support for human, technical and financial talent.

- Deepen actions with the United Nations Office in Venezuela and with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and especially with the United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programs in Venezuela, within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding in the framework of Cooperation which was signed between our country and these instances, which seeks institutional strengthening in the field of Human Rights, focused on the medium and long term, in order to promote a comprehensive system to comply with the various commitments made by our country on Human Rights.

- Follow up on the commitments derived from the Bodies created by virtue of the international Human Rights Treaties and the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council, based on the recommendations received and accepted during the third cycle of the UPR of Venezuela, ahead of its Fourth Cycle.

- Continue to comply with the obligations derived from the International Covenants and Conventions on Human Rights. In this sense, the Venezuelan State has designed a systematic policy of effective response and follow-up to the recommendations of the Organs created by virtue of the International Human Rights Treaties and the UPR of the Human Rights Council, which aims to implement an analysis system and timely preparation of reports to be submitted to said mechanisms.

- Make known the scope and negative impact on the full enjoyment of Human Rights where the criminal application of Unilateral Coercive Measures, of an extraterritorial nature, by States and institutions.