

**Human Rights Council  
Universal Periodic Review- Venezuela  
Fourth cycle**

**Submissions in advance of the consideration of the fourth cycle of the  
Universal Periodic Review Process of the UN Human Rights Council**

**Academic Freedom and University Autonomy in Venezuela**



**17 July 2026**

## **Institutional information**

### **Coalition for Academic Freedom in the Americas**

The Coalition for Academic Freedom in the Americas (CAFA), chaired by the University of Monterrey, Scholars at Risk, and the Human Rights Research and Education Center (HRREC) at the University of Ottawa, fosters the promotion, protection, and respect for academic freedom, with the goal of developing relevant human rights standards that serve to protect higher education spaces, to identify best practices, and to strengthen democratic principles in the Americas.

Website: <https://cafa-claa.org/>

### **Aula Abierta**

Aula Abierta is a non-governmental organization that works to defend universities in Latin America through initiatives that promote and defend human rights in the university setting—particularly academic freedom, the right to a quality education, and the freedom of association and peaceful assembly—by engaging various university stakeholders in networks to implement communication initiatives (social media and audiovisual media) aimed at raising public awareness through research and documentation of situations related to human rights violations in the university setting, as well as by implementing advocacy strategies before human rights bodies in Latin America.

Website: <https://aulaabiortalatinoamerica.org/>

### **Human Rights Clinic of the Human Rights Research and Education Centre, University of Ottawa**

The Human Rights Clinic is an initiative of the Human Rights Research and Education Centre at the University of Ottawa which, through an interdisciplinary approach, seeks to: (i) strengthen the protection of human rights through research, training, and technical assistance regarding the implementation of human rights standards; (ii) foster capacity building and provide recommendations for public policies with a human rights focus; and (iii) promote the study of human rights in Canada.

Website: <https://cdp-hrc.uottawa.ca/>

### **Scholars at Risk**

Scholars at Risk is an international network of institutions and individuals whose mission it is to protect scholars and promote academic freedom. Scholars at Risk provides advisory services for scholars and hosts, campaigns for scholars who are imprisoned or silenced in their home countries, monitoring of attacks on higher education communities worldwide, and leadership in deploying new tools and strategies for promoting academic freedom and improving respect for university values everywhere.

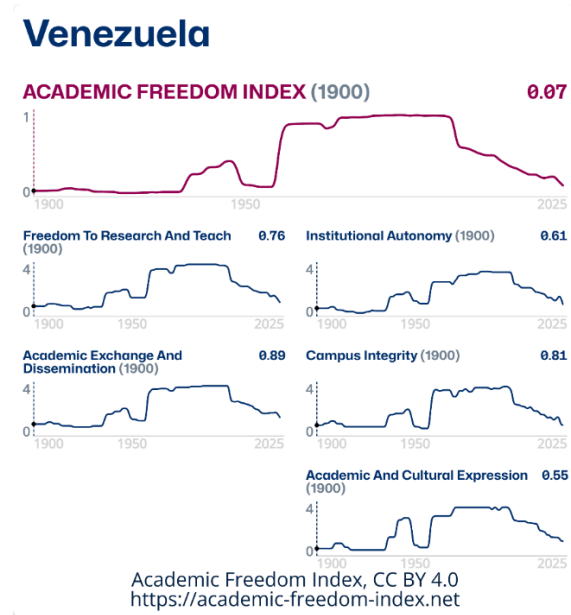
Website: <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/>

## **Introduction**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the honourable members of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) information related to attacks to academic freedom and university autonomy during Venezuela's fourth cycle under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process<sup>1</sup>. The report, subscribed by the Coalition for Academic Freedom in the Americas, Aula Abierta, the Human Rights Research and Education Centre of the University of Ottawa, and Scholars at Risk, aims to empower States to provide useful recommendations to ensure that academic freedom protections in Venezuela meet international human rights standards.
2. This report will provide information related to political and legal harassment against members of the academic community, political and financial restraints against higher-education institutions, and attacks on peaceful students protests, among others. Conclusions and recommendations follow at the close of the report.

## **The importance of including academic freedom as a topic under the UPR process**

3. Academic freedom plays a foundational role in the effective enjoyment of rights under international human rights law, as it safeguards the ability of scholars and students to seek, generate, and share knowledge without interference, supporting the broader exercise of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and equality.
4. During the present reporting cycle, international authorities have raised grave concerns about the crisis of attacks and threats against universities and academic communities<sup>2</sup>, including in the forms of restrictions on freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, equality and non-discrimination, among others. These global patterns are reflected in Venezuela.
5. According to the Academic Freedom Index, which examines conditions related to academic freedom around the world based on data generated by thousands of researchers, Venezuela, which was ranked in the top 10th percentile globally for roughly 40 years, suffered a sharp decline in 2000, and has continued to fall steadily in the years since, now ranked within the bottom 15% worldwide<sup>3</sup>.
6. During the third periodic review process alone, the country's score declined from an already low .23% in 2022 to .13% in 2025.<sup>4</sup> As demonstrated in the graph below, the reasons for the decline include attacks against members of the academic community, political control over higher education institutions and restrictions on the exercise of basic human rights, including freedom of expression and assembly<sup>5</sup>:



7. This situation has been acknowledged by the honourable members of the HRC. Within the context of the UPR, state recommendations to Venezuela have included explicit expressions of concern about both academic freedom and university autonomy.<sup>6</sup> In the third UPR cycle on Venezuela, for example, Uruguay recommended<sup>7</sup>:

“31.179 Cease the intervention in universities and other higher education institutes, and transform without delay the parallel system of non-autonomous universities so that they achieve full independence and academic freedom”.

8. As the international human rights community, within the United Nations system and elsewhere, has increasingly recognized, healthy universities are foundational to a healthy democracy and indispensable to social and scientific progress, fostering critical thinking in the population, and reinforcing human rights and the rule of law. Attacks and long-term restrictions on higher education therefore have deep impact far beyond the institutions themselves.
9. Given the long, ongoing history of pressures and attacks on higher education in Venezuela, we urge the HRC and member States to work to advance protections for academic freedom and related rights in Venezuela, consistent with the human rights standards discussed in detail below<sup>8</sup>.

### Legal foundations of academic freedom in international human rights law

10. Academic freedom is “the human right to acquire, develop, transmit, apply, and engage with a diversity of knowledge and ideas through research, teaching, learning, and discourse.”<sup>9</sup> As both the Special Rapporteur on the protection and promotion of freedom of opinion and expression, and the Special Rapporteur on the right to

education have noted, “academic freedom should be understood to include the freedom of individuals, as members of academic communities (e.g., faculty, students, staff, scholars, administrators and community participants) or in their own pursuits, to conduct activities involving the discovery and transmission of information and ideas, and to do so with the full protection of human rights law.”<sup>10</sup>

11. Several UN actors, together with other international organizations, have adopted instruments recognizing the both the scope of human rights protections applicable to academic freedom, and the crisis of attacks on educational institutions and encroachments on academic freedom more broadly. These instruments include the 2020 report on academic freedom by the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression<sup>11</sup>; the 2021 Inter-American Principles on the Right to Academic Freedom and University Autonomy<sup>12</sup>; the Joint Statement of more than 70 States in Support of Academic Freedom before the UN Human Rights Council<sup>13</sup>; the Report on Academic Freedom by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education<sup>14</sup>, and the Principles for Implementing the Right to Academic Freedom<sup>15</sup>, among others.
12. Academic freedom is fully and independently grounded in rights to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to education, and the right to the benefits of science, as articulated, respectively, in International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).<sup>16</sup> Venezuela is a party to both covenants.
13. Venezuela is party to a range of binding international instruments that protect academic freedom and related rights, including the ICCPR, ICESCR, and the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.<sup>17</sup> Under the ICCPR, Venezuela must protect the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, a guarantee that extends to academic research, teaching, publication, and participation in public debate.
14. ICESCR requires Venezuela to respect the right to education and the freedom indispensable for scientific research, respectively. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comments No. 13 and No. 25 further clarify that institutional autonomy is a precondition for academic freedom and that states must avoid retrogressive measures, such as politically motivated restructuring of universities, restrictions on curricula, or limits on international scientific cooperation.<sup>18</sup>
15. The 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, which defines academic freedom as the right to teach, discuss, research, publish, and disseminate freely, and obliges states to safeguard higher-education institutions from political and economic interference.<sup>19</sup> Institutional autonomy is a necessary precondition for the fulfillment of academic freedom, and, as UNESCO has noted, “Member States are under an obligation to protect higher education institutions from threats to their autonomy coming from any source.”<sup>20</sup>

16. The UN Special Rapporteurs for freedom of opinion as well as the right to education have both stated that external interference in academic governance, curriculum content, and research activity is incompatible with states' obligations under ICCPR<sup>21</sup> and ICESCR.<sup>22</sup>
17. At the regional level, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has provided detailed guidance regarding States' obligation to protect and promote academic freedom in the Inter-American Principles on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy<sup>23</sup>. Echoing international human rights standards in significant part, the Inter-American Principles define academic freedom as follows:

Academic freedom entails the right of every individual to seek, generate, and transmit knowledge, to form part of academic communities, and to conduct independent work to carry out scholarly activities of teaching, learning, training, investigation, discovery, transformation, debate, research, dissemination of information and ideas, and access to quality education freely and without fear of reprisals. In addition, academic freedom has a collective dimension, consisting of the right of society and its members to receive the information, knowledge, and opinions produced in the context of academic activity and to obtain access to the benefits and products of research and innovation.

18. With respect to university autonomy, the Inter-American Principles state the following:

Autonomy is an essential prerequisite for academic freedom and works to guarantee that higher education institutions can fulfill their mission and objectives of production and dissemination of knowledge. As a pillar of democracy and expression of the self-governance of academic institutions, autonomy guarantees the exercise of teaching, research, and extension services, as well as financial, organizational, educational, scientific, and personnel-related decision-making. By virtue of this principle, state regulations concerning education should be directed toward guaranteeing the process of learning, teaching, researching, and disseminating knowledge in a manner that is pluralistic, participatory, and democratic, and should guarantee the self-governance of academic institutions, which includes, among other things, the free functioning of teaching staffs and student bodies.

19. University autonomy is recognized in the Venezuelan University Act of 1958 and was incorporated in the Venezuelan National Constitution,<sup>24</sup> which defines "a 'permanent integral quality education' as an essential root of democracy, a human right and a 'public service,' for whose provision Venezuela has the primary responsibility at all levels and for all its forms."<sup>25</sup> Academic freedom is enshrined in Articles 6, 7 and 9 of the University Law and in Article 36 of the Organic Law of Education.
20. These international instruments and statements by states recognize academic freedom as a right that is grounded on freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, the

right to education as well as other internationally recognized human rights, as discussed below.

### **Attacks on academic freedom in Venezuela applicable to the fourth universal periodic review cycle**

21. Despite the broad documentation of attacks against academic freedom in Venezuela, the situation to members of academic communities and higher-education institutions continue to be dire. As reported by the IACHR's Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression, "(...) the university environment in Venezuela was marked by a hostile atmosphere and violations of academic freedom, including arrests, persecution, harassment, and threats"<sup>26</sup>.

### ***Attacks against members of the academic community in Venezuela***

22. One of the main concerns of our organizations is the systematic attack against members of the academic community. Through both direct, physical attacks against or imprisonment of faculty, students and other members of the higher education community, and through government policy (including policies relating to university budgets, university governance around student elections and appointment of university officials), Venezuelan authorities have systemically undermined academic freedom, freedom of expression and the right to assembly on campus. Too often, the documentation of these attacks fails to recognize that the motivation behind these actions is to silence the ideas and expression that come out of higher education spaces<sup>27</sup>.
23. As reported by the IACHR's Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression: "Between January 1 and October 10, 2025, at least 22 people with direct links to academia were reportedly detained and/or harassed — 19 detained and three prosecuted"<sup>28</sup>. Similarly, "(...) between July 28, 2024, and October 10, 2025, the organization Aula Abierta [one of the co-signatories of this report] documented a total of 95 incidents of reprisals against university professors and students, including 54 arrests, 40 cases of harassment, and the cancellation of a university professor's passport"<sup>29</sup>.
24. Attacks against scholars during the current review cycle of the HRC have included the following:
  - a. The detention, reported on January 27, 2023, by security forces of a Metropolitan University professor, following her meeting with UN officials.<sup>30</sup>
  - b. On August 31, 2025, unidentified armed individuals abducted a visiting lecturer and student activist from the University of Los Andes (ULA) in Mérida.<sup>31</sup>

- c. On September 12, 2025, a law professor at Fermín Toro University and frequent government critic disappeared under circumstances suggesting retaliation for political expression.<sup>32</sup>
  - d. On September 28, 2025, officers from Venezuela's National Anti-Extortion and Kidnapping Command (CONAS) arrested a professor of economics at Valle del Momboy University, for public comments that he made regarding national economic policy.<sup>33</sup>
  - e. On October 20, 2025, Venezuela's Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (SEBIN) arrested a physician and professor at the Faculty of Medicine of the Universidad de Los Andes, after he posted on social media post to celebrate Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado's Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>34</sup>
25. Students have been among the main targets of the Venezuelan government's repressive measures. Examples of attacks on students during the current review cycle of the HRC include the following:
- a. On April 30, 2025, for example, armed individuals, self-identified as plainclothes police officers, forcibly entered the student center at the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of Los Andes, where they reportedly assaulted and threatened a group of students from the Fuerza ULA movement, forcing all six of the students to the ground at gunpoint, taking their wallets, cell phones, and laptops, and threatening them with arrest.<sup>35</sup>
  - b. On July 18, 2025, student council member at the Central University of Venezuela (UCV) was abducted from his home by individuals who were apparently affiliated with Venezuelan security forces, and held for roughly three days.<sup>36</sup>
  - c. Similarly, on October 24, 2025, suspected security forces abducted a UCV law student and youth leader of the Vente Venezuela party, from his home, without providing information about his whereabouts. The perpetrators did not produce a warrant or other identification. The same student had been arrested the prior year in connection with campaign activities. He was released after roughly a day in detention.<sup>37</sup>
  - d. On October 31, 2025, the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (SEBIN) arrested two Central University of Venezuela (UCV) art students while they were conducting thesis research at the Aragua Penitentiary Center.<sup>38</sup>
  - e. In January 2026, several attacks and acts of harassment against students at the Central University of Venezuela were reported. These included the illegal confiscation of cell phones<sup>39</sup>, the Bolivarian National Police's interference in a

peaceful protest<sup>40</sup>, and attempts to search personal belongings without a warrant<sup>41</sup>.

26. Likewise, government officials have publicly targeted members of the academic community. In April 2026, Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello accused the dean of the Faculty of Legal and Political Sciences at the Central University of Venezuela of being “involved in alleged acts of sabotage” linked to opposition leader María Corina Machado, based on unsubstantiated claims that the university was involved in anti-government protests<sup>42</sup>.
27. Amidst the shrinking of civic space nationwide<sup>43</sup>, the academic community has faced attacks not only from state security forces but also from parastatal groups (colectivos). These entities have targeted university elections and academic media, executed arbitrary arrests of students and faculty, and suppressed demonstrations, among other hostile actions<sup>44</sup>.
28. Challenges documenting attacks, systematic impunity, and a lack of independent oversight, including by the judiciary, all contribute to the lack of protection and extreme vulnerability of members of the education community. As the IACHR Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression concludes on this point:

“(...) murder, kidnapping, intimidation, harassment, threats, gender-based violence, and other attacks against individuals because of their participation in the academic community or the exercise of their activities, as well as attacks against institutions, libraries, or laboratories, violate the fundamental rights of individuals, restrict academic freedom, and sow self-censorship in society. It is the duty of States to prevent and investigate these acts, punish their perpetrators, protect victims, and ensure adequate redress, regardless of whether the harmful acts occurred through analog or digital means. The Office calls on the Venezuelan State to cease all acts of harassment, intimidation, and persecution against members of the academic community who participate in the discussion of matters of public interest”<sup>45</sup>.

29. We can conclude that the Venezuelan government has carried out systematic attacks against civil society, including members of the academic community. This situation has created a climate of insecurity and vulnerability. Harassment, arbitrary arrests, and the suppression of freedom of expression and freedom of association are some examples of attacks on the academic freedom of professors and students. Given the widespread impunity, we respectfully request for the HRC to include recommendations to Venezuela to put an end to these attacks.

***Working conditions within universities in Venezuela***

30. A specific point of concern for our organizations is the precarious conditions under which academic life unfolds in the country. Low salaries, the absence of social benefits, and the lack of investment in infrastructure all significantly impact academic freedom<sup>46</sup>, as well as the development and production of knowledge.

31. While national economic challenges may limit a state's ability to provide educational institutions with all necessary resources, the context and history of government attacks on higher education suggest that the allocation of resources away from disfavored institutions represents a policy choice, ultimately aimed at undermining academic freedom and critical thinking. As stated in a 2025 report from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

“Universities continued to face challenges to safeguard their academic freedom, impacting the right to education and the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications. Reportedly universities received four per cent of requested budgets, affecting in part salary payments”<sup>47</sup>.
32. For example, in February 2026, the Teachers' Association, unions representing administrative and technical staff at the Central University of Venezuela, along with organizations from across the country, held a peaceful march from the university to Plaza Caracas and the Labor Inspectorate<sup>48</sup>. The purpose of the action was to denounce the crisis surrounding the national minimum wage, which has been “frozen” for four years, as well as the rejected implementation of the directive from the National Budget Office (ONAPRE)—factors that have reduced the sector's pay scales to ranges between 0.28 USD and 1.50 USD per month<sup>49</sup>.
33. Working conditions are so precarious that, in February 2026, the deans of the Faculties of Law and Political Science at the Central University of Venezuela, the University of Los Andes, and the University of Zulia, along with the secretary of the University of Carabobo, filed a constitutional lawsuit before the Supreme Court of Justice<sup>50</sup>. The lawsuit accuses the Venezuelan government of constitutional omission, based on the failure to adjust the minimum wage during the fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025<sup>51</sup>. At the time of this report, the case was still pending before that court.
34. This working condition affects everyone, not just university professors<sup>52</sup>. In January 2026, representatives of the National Federation of Higher Education Workers' Unions of Venezuela, the Workers' Union of the Simón Rodríguez National Experimental University, and various unions at the Central University of Venezuela gathered at the main entrance of the latter institution to denounce the wage crisis that public sector workers have been facing for the past four years, and the meetings held between the Ministry of Labor and unions aligned with the ruling party<sup>53</sup>.
35. This precarious situation violates the principle of progressive labor rights. These working conditions constitute a mechanism for dismantling the social security system, pensions, health insurance, and unemployment funds, leaving university staff vulnerable to social and health contingencies<sup>54</sup>.

***Attacks on institutional autonomy of Venezuelan universities***

36. Encroachments on university autonomy remain a persistent and serious problem. The presence of police and military troops on campus, as well as the exertion of political control over universities – including efforts to manipulate elections for university leadership, deprivation of resources, and attempts to appoint individuals sympathetic to the government to university leadership – are significant concerns.
37. On November 3, 2022, for example, members of a pro-government militia reportedly attacked students at the Universidad de Los Andes in Merida as they engaged in a peaceful protest against the presence on campus of senior government officials.<sup>55</sup>
38. As reported by the IACHR in January 2025, police established checkpoints around the University of Oriente and Central University of Venezuela to intimidate university officials and students<sup>56</sup>.
39. In February 2026, a massive presence of military and police personnel was reported in the vicinity of the Táchira campus of the University of Los Andes<sup>57</sup>. The deployment of state security forces came in response to a peaceful demonstration organized by the student movement, whose central demand was the release of political prisoners in Venezuela<sup>58</sup>.
40. In March 2026, agents of the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (SEBIN) infiltrated a peaceful protest organized by the University of the Andes community<sup>59</sup>. According to student organizations, these security agents recorded and photographed the faces of the protesters to identify them. The academic community denounced these targeted surveillance actions by state security forces as an attempt to intimidate university workers and create a climate of fear to undermine their demands for labor rights and higher wages.
41. A signal example of the erosion of university autonomy is the dispossession of university property. As reported by the IACHR, in May 2025, the government built a bus station over a facility used by the Central University of Venezuela that affected the institution's income. The station was built without the authorization of the university. The IACHR commented that such measures are "(...) part of a policy to systemically dispossess it of its goods, which are essential to its operation"<sup>60</sup>.
42. The above measures cannot be seen in isolation but rather must be understood as part of a broader picture in which state actors may encroach on university spaces with few limitations, stripping universities of control over matters like governance, security, curricula, hiring and admissions. Without autonomy over these matters, universities cannot possibly engage in the independent research and truth-seeking necessary to function.

## **Conclusion and final petitions to the Human Rights Council**

The purpose of this report was to focus on attacks against academic freedom and university autonomy in Venezuela during the current review cycle of Venezuela's UPR process. Our organizations respectfully urge UN member States to call on Venezuela to:

- a. Accept this report submitted by the Coalition for Academic Freedom in the Americas, Aula Abierta, the Human Rights Research and Education Centre of the University of Ottawa, and Scholars at Risk.

Refrain from engaging in arrests, prosecutions, or violence intended to prevent or retaliate for the nonviolent exercise of the right to academic freedom, or otherwise targeting scholars, students, or other members of the education community;

- b. Ensure that violent attacks on scholars and students are investigated in a thorough, transparent, and public manner, and that perpetrators are held accountable;
- c. Implement reforms to protect institutional autonomy consistent with relevant human rights standards and Venezuela's constitution, including ensuring both physical autonomy of university campuses, and autonomy over curricula, hiring and firing, admissions, and governance;
- d. Implement reforms recognizing the right to academic freedom consistent with international human rights standards;
- e. Adopt the necessary policies and budget lines to assure that universities and staff have the appropriate resources, labor conditions and infrastructure to properly carry their mission.
- f. Recommend that the state of Venezuela must ensure that universities' exercise of institutional authority does not undermine the fundamental rights of the academic community to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.

The undersigned organizations thank the UN Human Rights Council for accepting and considering this report.

Coalition for Academic Freedom in the Americas  
Aula Abierta  
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Scholars at Risk

Report: Academic Freedom and University Autonomy in Venezuela  
Universal Periodic Review- Venezuela  
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<sup>2</sup> Scholars at Risk, “Free to Think: Report of the Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project” (2025), online: <[www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources/free-to-think-2025/](http://www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources/free-to-think-2025/)>.

<sup>3</sup> See: Academic Freedom Index, Global Report 2025. In: <https://academic-freedom-index.net/>

<sup>4</sup> See: Academic Freedom Index, Global Report 2025. In: <https://academic-freedom-index.net/>

<sup>5</sup> See: Academic Freedom Index, Global Report 2025. In: <https://academic-freedom-index.net/>

<sup>6</sup> See Cycle 2 Recommendation by Slovenia to “Reform the Education Act in order to achieve its compliance with international standards on the protection of the right to autonomy and academic freedom” and Report of the of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, A/HRC/50/8, 11 April 2022, para 31.179 (“Cease the intervention in universities and other higher education institutes, and transform without delay the parallel system of non-autonomous universities so that they achieve full independence and academic freedom” (Recommendation by Uruguay)).

<sup>7</sup> Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*, A/HRC/50/8 (11 April 2022).

<sup>8</sup> For context, see: United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Outcomes of the investigation into allegations of possible violations of the human rights to life, liberty, and physical and moral integrity in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*, A/HRC/44/20 (17 September 2020).

<sup>9</sup> Principles for Implementing the Right to Academic Freedom, A/HRC/56/CRP.2

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, A/HRC/56/58 (A/HRC/56/58), para. 9, quoting Report of the Special Rapporteur on the protection and promotion of freedom of opinion and expression, A/75/261 (A/75/261), para. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, 28 July 2020, document A/75/261.

<sup>12</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Inter-American Principles on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy*. Adopted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights during the 182nd Regular Session, held from December 6 to 17, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland, “Joint declaration on Academic Freedom” (29 March 2023) online: <[onu-geneve.delegfrance.org/joint-declaration-on-academic-freedom](https://onu-geneve.delegfrance.org/joint-declaration-on-academic-freedom)>.

<sup>14</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, 27 June 2024, document A/HRC/56/58.

<sup>15</sup> Principles for Implementing the Right to Academic Freedom, A/HRC/56/CRP.2.

<sup>16</sup> See General comment No. 25 (2020) on science and economic, social and cultural rights, E/C.12/GC/25 (2020), para. 46; A/HRC/56/58, para. 10; A/75/261, para. 5; R. Quinn and J. Levine, *Intellectual-HRDs & Claims for Academic Freedom Under Human Rights Law*, Int’l J. of Hum. Rts., Dec. 2014, Vol. 18, Issue 7-8, ISBN: 1364-2987.

<sup>17</sup> See UN Treaty Collection Website:

<https://treaties.un.org/pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=0800000280134150> and OHCHR website [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=77&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=77&Lang=en)

<sup>18</sup> CESCR. General Comment No. 13: The Right to Education (Art. 13 of the Covenant), *Contained in Document E/C.12/1999/10*, 1999 and CESCR. General comment No. 25 (2020) on science and economic, social and cultural rights (article 15 (1) (b), (2), (3) and (4) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), E/C.12/GC/25, 2020 <https://www.refworld.org/legal/general/cescr/1999/en/37937> and <https://docs.un.org/en/E/C.12/GC/25>

<sup>19</sup> UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997) (RSHETP) at paras. 17-20

- <sup>20</sup> UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997); *see also* Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, A/HRC/56/57, paras. 48-50.
- <sup>21</sup> UNGA. Report on academic freedom and the freedom of opinion and expression A/75/261 (2020) paras. 37-41 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/75/261>
- <sup>22</sup> UNHRC. The right to academic freedom: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education A/HRC/56/58 (2024) paras. 48-50 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/56/58>
- <sup>23</sup> See: at [https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/questionnaires/2021\\_principiosinteramericanos\\_libertadacademica\\_autonomiauniversitaria\\_eng.pdf](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/questionnaires/2021_principiosinteramericanos_libertadacademica_autonomiauniversitaria_eng.pdf).
- <sup>24</sup> See Articles 102 and 103 of the 1999 Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
- <sup>25</sup> See Thomas Murh and Antoni Verger, *Venezuela: Higher Education For All*, January 2006, available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276918225\\_Venezuela\\_Higher\\_Education\\_For\\_All](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276918225_Venezuela_Higher_Education_For_All)
- <sup>26</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights- Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression, *Annual Report 2025*, para. 1654.
- <sup>27</sup> See Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Advance unedited version*, A/HRC/59/58 (18 June 2025).
- <sup>28</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights- Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression, *Annual Report 2025*, para. 1655.
- <sup>29</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights- Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression, *Annual Report 2025*, para. 1655.
- <sup>30</sup> Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project (SAR AFMP), January 27, 2023 <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2023-01-27-metropolitan-university/>
- <sup>31</sup> SAR AFMP, August 31, 2025, <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2025-08-31-universidad-de-los-andes/>
- <sup>32</sup> SAR AFMP, September 12, 2025, <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2025-09-12-fermin-toro-university/>
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- <sup>35</sup> SAR AFMP, April 30, 2025 <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2025-04-30-universidad-de-los-andes/>
- <sup>36</sup> SAR AFMP, July 18, 2025, <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2025-07-18-central-university-of-venezuela/>
- <sup>37</sup> SAR AFMP, October 24, 2025, <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2025-10-24-central-university-of-venezuela/>
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- <sup>44</sup> Aula Abierta, “Aula Abierta documenta al menos 35 ataques ejecutados por colectivos contra universitarios en Venezuela entre 2014 y 2026” (4 de mayo de 2026). Disponible en: <https://aulaabiortalatinoamerica.org/2026/05/04/aula-abierta-documenta-al-menos-35-ataques-ejecutados-por-colectivos-contra-universitarios-en-venezuela-entre-2014-y-2026/>

<sup>45</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights- Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression, *Annual Report 2025*, para. 1664. Footnotes omitted.

<sup>46</sup> For context, see: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Situation of Human Rights and Technical Assistance in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*, A/HRC/48/19 (21 October 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Situation of Human Rights and Technical Assistance in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*, A/HRC/53/54 (17 November 2023), para. 6.

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<sup>49</sup> Nota de prensa de prensa de Noticias UCV. Gremios de la UCV se pronuncian a favor de un ingreso salarial justo. 25 de febrero de 2025. Disponible en: <https://ucvnoticias.ucv.ve/ucv/gremios-de-la-ucv/>

<sup>50</sup> Nota de prensa de RunrunEs. Introducen recurso ante el TSJ para que bonos sean integrados formalmente al salario. 02 de febrero de 2026. Disponible en: <https://runrun.es/noticias/599301/introducen-recurso-ante-el-tsj-para-que-bonos-sean-integrados-formalmente-al-salario/>

<sup>51</sup> Nota de prensa del medio La Verdad. Decanos de Ciencias Jurídicas de la UCV, ULA y LUZ demandan aumento de salario ante el TSJ. 02 de febrero de 2026. Disponible en: <https://laverdad.com/decanos-de-ciencias-juridicas-de-la-ucv-ula-y-luz-demandan-aumento-de-salario-ante-el-tsj/>

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<sup>53</sup> Nota de prensa de Noticias UCV. Sindicatos universitarios se pronuncian ante situación salarial en el país. 20 de enero de 2026. Disponible en: <https://ucvnoticias.ucv.ve/ucv/sindicatos-universitarios-salario/>

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<sup>55</sup> SAR AFMP, November 3, 2022, <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2022-11-03-universidad-de-los-andes/>

<sup>56</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Annual Report 2025*, IACHR: Washington, 2026, p. 838, para. 114.

<sup>57</sup> Denuncian presencia militar y policial en manifestación pacífica por el Día de la Juventud. 12 de febrero de 2026. Disponible en: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DUqRhGqEQ88/?igsh=dmR2aTZnc3k5cjF1>  
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<sup>58</sup> Estudiantes de ULA Táchira exigen la liberación de todos los presos políticos. 12 de febrero de 2026.

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<sup>59</sup> Denuncia de Voluntarios con Venezuela, seccional Mérida, publicado en la red social Instagram. 23 de marzo de 2026. Disponible en: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DWPbNB-DR6E/?igsh=OGRxMTc0ZjlodmNI>

<sup>60</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Annual Report 2025*, IACHR: Washington, 2026, p. 838, para. 115.