

PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COALITION OF HUMAN
RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE AMERICAS

**Denunciation of the American Convention on Human Rights by Venezuela
weakens protection of the fundamental rights of its citizens**

September 9th, 2013

The undersigned organizations, members of the International Coalition of Organizations for Human Rights in the Americas, lament the imminent entry into force of the denunciation of the American Convention on Human Rights by Venezuela as of September 10th, 2013. Echoing the call made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations, we urge the Venezuelan State to reconsider in an urgent manner its decision to deprive its citizens of the protection that this international instrument offers.

The Inter-American Court, as well as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, are autonomous and independent organs, which in the exercise of their functions have protected the rights of thousands of victims and citizens of our continent. With this decision, the violations of the human rights protected by the American Convention having occurred in Venezuelan territory after the stated date will not be able to be presented before the Inter-American Tribunal.

The Inter-American Commission will be able to continue hearing about future violations of human rights that occur in Venezuela, by virtue of being a member of the Organization of American States (OAS). That is to say, Venezuela should comply with the obligations that are imposed by the Charter of the OAS and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man.

Since their creation, the Inter-American Court and Commission have analyzed cases of grave human rights violations and have contributed significantly to the consolidation of democratic institutions, the adoption of legislation which promotes equality and guarantees the protection of human rights, as well as to the struggle against impunity. These bodies have focused particularly on the protection of people or groups in vulnerable situations, the struggle for the eradication of both gender-based violence and discrimination due to sexual orientation, the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, and the prohibition of both torture as well as the practice of forced disappearance. Moreover, these two bodies have made a considerable contribution to the promotion, development and enhanced protection of economic, social and cultural rights.

In this sense, Venezuela's denunciation of the American Convention represents a grave backlash for the protection of human rights in the region. Additionally, this denunciation is preceded in recent years by the non-compliance of most of the sentences and measures of protection issued by the Inter-American Court.

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Finally, in the framework of the commitments assumed in the XLIV Extraordinary General Assembly of the OAS, celebrated last March 22nd, 2013 in relation to the strengthening of the Inter-American System, we call on the Member States of the OAS to reaffirm their commitment to the universality of the Inter-American System by carrying out all the necessary actions so that Venezuela reconsiders its decision to denounce the American Convention on Human Rights.

Signatories:

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Lawyers without Borders Canadá (ASFC)

Amnesty International

Federación Internacional de Derechos Humanos (FIDH)

Global Rights - Partners for Justice

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente (AIDA)

Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)

Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (CLADEM)

Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo (PIDHDD)

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)

BY COUNTRY

Brazil:

Associação Juízes para a Democracia (AJD)

Conectas Direitos Humanos

Bolivia:

Oficina Jurídica Para la Mujer

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Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (CLADEM – Bolivia)

Chile:

Centro Regional de Derechos Humanos y Justicia de Género, Corporación Humanas

Colombia:

Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento Forzado (CODHES).

Corporación Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo (CCAJAR)

Costa Rica:

Defensa de Niñas y Niños – Internacional (DNI)

Ecuador:

Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos “Segundo Montes Mozo S.J.” (CSMM)

El Salvador

Instituto de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas" (IDHUCA)

Guatemala:

Fundación Myrna Mack

Instituto de Estudios Comparados en Ciencias Penales de Guatemala.

Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos – Guatemala (UDEFEUGUA)

Honduras

Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación (ERIC-SJ)

México:

Abogadas y Abogados para la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos, A.C.

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Asistencia Legal por los Derechos Humanos A.C. (ASILEGAL)

Centro de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres, A.C. (CEDHEM)

Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, A.C.

Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, A.C. (Centro Prodh)

Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CMDPDH)

Iniciativas para la Identidad y la Inclusión AC

Nicaragua:

Centro Nicaraguense de Derechos Humanos (CENIDH)

Panamá

Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas (CIDEM)

Perú:

Asociación Paz y Esperanza, Perú

Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos (APRODEH)

Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos - Perú EQUIDAD

Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos

Equipo de Incidencia en Derecho

Fundación Ecuménica para el Desarrollo y la Paz (FEDEPAZ)

Uruguay:

Instituto de Estudios Legales y Sociales del Uruguay (IELSUR)

Venezuela:

Acción Solidaria

Comité de Familiares de Víctimas de los Sucesos de Febrero-Marzo de 1989
(COFAVIC)

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CIVILIS Derechos Humanos

Vicaría de Derechos Humanos de Caracas