



Statement by Slovenia  
at the  
**44<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Interactive dialogue with the High Commissioner for Human rights on Venezuela**

*Geneva, 15 July 2020*

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Madame President,

we thank madam High Commissioner for the presentation of the report.

While aligning with the EU statement, we strongly emphasize the importance for the Venezuelan authorities to establish conditions for free and fair democratic processes. We remain concerned about the escalating restrictions on the civic and democratic space, freedom of expression and assembly, detention of political opposition leaders, journalists, trade unionists, medical doctors and other health professionals.

Despite some progress, we remain concerned. The overall situation has been further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, exposing weaknesses in healthcare system, limiting access to health services, hampering access to safe drinking water, food and power supply. Moreover, the most vulnerable groups, children and older persons are deprived of basic services on a daily basis.

We urge Venezuela to take all the necessary measures in order to prevent further deterioration of the humanitarian and human rights situation as well as to adequately address, without delay, the urgent need to improve the overall situation of its people.

Therefore, we firmly call on Venezuelan authorities to release all political prisoners, including journalists, medical professionals and human rights defenders, to prevent torture and ill-treatment and to thoroughly investigate all alleged human rights violations.

In conclusion, we strongly encourage Venezuela to continue its full cooperation with the OHCHR and the HRC special procedures.

I thank you.