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# Venezuela: Bolivarian National Guard responsible for systematic violations and crimes against humanity, UN Fact-Finding Mission says

11 December 2025

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**GENEVA** – Officials of Venezuela’s Bolivarian National Guard (GNB) have committed serious human rights violations and crimes against humanity for more than a decade, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela said in its latest [report](#) today.

This report was prepared during the mandates of the three Members – Marta Valiñas, Francisco Cox Vial, and Patricia Tappatá Valdez – the latter two having concluded their terms on 31 October 2025.

The report – which includes an in-depth analysis of the internal operational structures of the GNB, including its chain of command – concluded that GNB officials perpetrated arbitrary deprivation of life, arbitrary detentions, sexual and gender-based violence, as well as torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment during law enforcement operations in the context of protests and in actions of targeted political persecution since 2014. The persistence of these abuses reflects structural failures within Venezuela’s accountability and political system which have further entrenched impunity.

“The facts we have documented show the role of the GNB in a pattern of systematic and coordinated repression against opponents or those perceived as such, which has continued for more than a decade,” said Marta Valiñas, Chair of the Fact-Finding Mission. “The persistence of these crimes and the absence of adequate justice require a determined response from national and international accountability mechanisms.”

The report details how Venezuela’s “national security” doctrine has merged military and police functions, legitimising the militarization of public security and expanding the role of the GNB in operations aimed at social control and internal repression. The highly centralised chain of command – under the direction of the President of the Republic as Commander-in-Chief of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB) – has facilitated the execution of unlawful actions without effective internal control mechanisms or accountability.

During protest peaks in 2014, 2017, 2019, and 2024, the GNB used excessive force, including the improper use of lethal and less-lethal weapons. The Fact-Finding Mission has reasonable grounds to believe that GNB officials fired firearms indiscriminately, including shots aimed directly at vital areas of victims' bodies. The Fact-Finding Mission also received information regarding the practice of modifying projectiles to cause greater harm.

The report also documented mass and targeted arbitrary detentions, physical violence during arrests, planting of evidence, torture and other ill-treatment, and sexual and gender-based violence inside GNB facilities used as temporary detention centers.

“The torture, ill-treatment, and acts of sexual violence we have verified – including assaults and rape – were not isolated incidents. They form part of a pattern of abuse used to punish and break victims,” said Valiñas.

The Fact-Finding Mission found that the GNB was a central actor in the commission of the crime against humanity of persecution on political grounds. According to data collected by civil society, it carried out the highest number of politically motivated detentions in 2019 and 2020. It also played a key role in the 2024 post-election “Operation Tun Tun,” aimed at targeting and criminalizing opponents through unfounded accusations of terrorism or incitement to hatred.

The report identifies a pattern of structural impunity sustained by systemic failures within the Venezuelan judicial system, revealing its inability or unwillingness to investigate or prosecute violations committed by the GNB: stalled investigations, prolonged procedural paralysis, manipulation of evidence, deliberate obstruction by the GNB, and accountability limited exclusively to low-ranking personnel.

The Fact-Finding Mission considers that there are reasonable grounds to believe that GNB officials, as well as senior military and political authorities, may bear criminal responsibility under Articles 25 and 28 of the Rome Statute as direct and indirect perpetrators, co-perpetrators, and through command responsibility.

“The Mission has reasonable grounds to believe that GNB officials made essential contributions to the crimes under investigation, including arbitrary detentions, torture and ill-treatment, gender-based violence, and persecution,” said Valiñas.

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**Read the full report (in Spanish only) [here](#).**

**Background:** In September 2019, the **UN Human Rights Council** established the **Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** to assess alleged human rights violations committed since 2014. The Fact-Finding Mission presented its latest annual report during an interactive dialogue at the Council in September 2024, accompanied by a conference room paper with its detailed findings. In its **resolution 57/36**, the Council extended the Fact-Finding Mission’s mandate for two more years, until October 2026.

**Information** on human rights violations can be submitted to the Mission securely and confidentially through this **[link](#)**.

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