



1.4. Legislation

Sources indicated that authorities continued to rely on two previously enacted laws to justify targeting dissent and imposing severe penalties:

the 2017 Law Against Hatred, adopted by the Constituent Assembly, establishes prison sentences of 10 to 20 years for anyone who publicly "promotes, encourages, or incites hatred, discrimination, or violence"; and

the 2012 Law Against Organized Crime and Terrorism Financing, which prescribes 25 to 30-year sentences for 'terrorist acts' intended to intimidate a population or to "severely destabilize or destroy" the fundamental political, constitutional, economic, or social structures of a country or an international organisation.[174](#)

Laws enacted or amended during the reference period included the following:

The Organic Law Liberator Simón Bolívar against the Imperialist Blockade and in Defense of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (Ley Orgánica Libertador Simón Bolívar contra el Bloqueo Imperialista y en Defensa de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela), was enacted in November 2024.[175](#) Article 2 outlines, as objectives of the Law, the following:

- '1. To safeguard and protect the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination of the Nation, as inalienable rights, based on the independence and anti-imperialist doctrine of Simón Bolívar, the Liberator.
2. To guarantee the full enjoyment of the human rights of the Venezuelan people, including the right to peace, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the international treaties ratified by the Republic.
3. To protect the national economy from actions that affect its harmonious development and erode the standard of living of the population.
4. To promote the establishment of criminal and civil liability for actions that violate the inalienable rights of the Nation and the human rights of the Venezuelan people.
5. To protect the rights of victims of unilateral coercive measures and other restrictive or punitive measures'.[176](#)

Sources indicated that the Law contains vague language that allows discretionary interpretation of its provisions to target civil-society organisations collaborating with international bodies.[177](#)

The law establishes penalties including disqualification from running for office, imprisonment, fines, political bans, expulsion of foreign nationals, revocation of property rights, and the cancellation of operating licences for radio and television broadcasters.^{[178](#)} These sanctions apply to individuals or entities deemed to promote, invoke, support, or participate in acts considered to be 'against the security of the Nation or to threaten its sovereignty, independence, self-determination, territorial integrity, cultural values, national symbols, or interests'.^{[179](#)}

The Law on Oversight, Regularisation, Action and Finance of Non-Governmental Organisations and Non-for-Profit Social Organisations (Ley de Fiscalización, Regularización, Actuación y Financiamiento de las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales y Afines), which entered into force in November 2024 and is commonly referred to as the 'Anti-NGO Law',^{[180](#)} functions as a tool of political control over NGOs.^{[181](#)} The law grants authorities broad discretionary powers over administrative sanctions and registration procedures.^{[182](#)} Only a limited number of organisations have completed the required registration process, while others have opted to suspend their operations in Venezuela.^{[183](#)} The UNFFMV reported that the registration process is marked by irregularities, including unequal treatment, denial of applications, and instances of bribery.^{[184](#)}

On 30 January 2026, the National Assembly approved a sweeping reform of the oil and gas law, reversing the 2006 changes introduced under President Hugo Chávez that had imposed high taxes and strict conditions on foreign private companies.^{[185](#)} Despite the reform, oil companies have remained hesitant to return to or invest in Venezuela, citing persistent political risk, legal instability, and significant infrastructural deterioration.^{[186](#)}

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HRW, Punished for Seeking Change, 30 April 2025, [url](#). See also: UN, FFMV, Statement by Maria Eloisa Quintero, Expert Member of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to the 61st session of the Human Rights Council, 12 March 2026, [url](#)

- [175](#)

Acceso a la Justicia, Ley Orgánica Libertador Simón Bolívar contra el Bloqueo Imperialista y en Defensa de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, 20 December 2024, [url](#)

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Acceso a la Justicia, Ley Orgánica Libertador Simón Bolívar contra el Bloqueo Imperialista y en Defensa de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, 20 December 2024, [url](#)

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UN, FFMV, Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 8 September 2025, [url](#), para. 88. See also: BBC, Venezuela aprueba una severa ley para castigar hasta con 30 años de prisión a quienes apoyen las sanciones internacionales contra el país, 29 November 2024, [url](#)

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Acceso a la Justicia, Ley Orgánica Libertador Simón Bolívar contra el Bloqueo Imperialista y en Defensa de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, 20 December 2024, [url](#)

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UN, FFMV, Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 8 September 2025, [url](#), para. 86; Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2026 Country Report — Venezuela, 2026, [url](#), p. 16

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UN, FFMV, Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 8 September 2025, [url](#), para. 86; Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2026 Country Report — Venezuela, 2026, [url](#), p. 16

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UN, FFMV, Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 8 September 2025, [url](#), para. 86

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UN, FFMV, Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 8 September 2025, [url](#), para. 87

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International Crisis Group, The Venezuela Paradigm: Is Trump’s Model Intervention a Mirage?, 27 March 2026, [url](#); BBC, Qué cambia en Venezuela con la nueva Ley de Hidrocarburos y por qué es una ruptura radical con 50 años de modelo petrolero, 30 January 2026, [url](#)

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Bnamericas, Por qué las grandes petroleras no se apresurarán a entrar en Venezuela, 18 February 2026, [url](#); International Crisis Group, The Venezuela Paradigm: Is Trump’s Model Intervention a Mirage?, 27 March 2026, [url](#)