

An Open Letter to the Government of the United States on the Humanitarian Response to the June 24 Earthquakes in Venezuela

July 8, 2026

The Honorable Secretary of State
Mr. Marco Rubio
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street N.W. Washington, D.C. 20451

We write as Venezuelan humanitarian organizations, Venezuelan and international civil society groups, and concerned citizens to express our gratitude for [committing](#) initially more than \$300 million in humanitarian funding to support life-saving assistance efforts, as well as the U.S. deployment of search-and-rescue teams, medical resources, and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

The hardest phase is only beginning. As the window to rescue survivors ends, the emergency is turning into a longer and more demanding effort: caring for thousands of injured, sheltering displaced families, protecting children separated from their loved ones, and sustaining a population that was already vulnerable before the disaster. This will be the work not of days but of many months, and the United States, given its capacity and its leadership in this response, has a singular role to play in it.

These earthquakes take place in a country that was already experiencing a complex humanitarian emergency. While the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated [7.9 million people in need](#), independent civil society organizations counted [12.4 million people](#) with severe and critical humanitarian needs before the earthquakes hit. The dismantling of democratic institutions and grand corruption has left the country unable to respond to this crisis, and the Venezuelan people severely unprotected. The response from the [Venezuelan authorities](#) has been vastly insufficient, with public complaints of security bodies creating [obstacles](#) to [access humanitarian aid](#) and committing [new abuses](#).

In this context, we respectfully ask that the United States government uses its intermediation with the Venezuelan authorities to help ensure:

1. Full transparency and public accountability over all humanitarian aid: the regular publication of what is received, its origin and purpose, its intended beneficiaries, and those responsible for its receipt, allocation, and distribution, together with independent verification that it reaches those for whom it is intended.
2. An appropriate response from the authorities led by civilians and not by the military. The Bolivarian National Guard is a part of the Armed Forces and a body that has committed [serious human rights violations](#). Public updates on the death toll and response from the government have come from the President of the National Assembly; the head of the legislative branch is not the competent authority to do so.
3. The temporary exemption of humanitarian aid from all taxes, tariffs, and customs duties, and the waiver of port and airport charges on relief shipments.

4. Streamlined entry and appropriate legal protections for international rescue, medical, and humanitarian personnel, so that no team is delayed in reaching those in need.
5. A single humanitarian coordination body for authorizations and clearances, with priority processing of humanitarian cargo.
6. Around-the-clock operation of available airports and seaports, and the designation of strategic air and maritime entry points.
7. Full access and operation of heavy machinery and necessary equipment to remove the rubble.
8. The safeguarding of humanitarian corridors and logistics centers.
9. Full authorization for international professional disaster response teams to enter and operate throughout the affected territory.
10. Assurance that aid is distributed solely on the basis of need and without discrimination, in keeping with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, with the full contribution of civil society and independent organizations.
11. Repeal of the Law on the Oversight, Regulation, Operation and Financing of Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Social Organizations, as well as any other legislation that would impede the work of civil society and humanitarian organizations.
12. Lifting all the blockades to social media, media outlets and VPNs.
13. Allowing Venezuelans with dual nationality with an expired Venezuelan passport to enter and leave the country, considering there are many professionals such as doctors, rescuers, nurses and engineers who are unable to access Venezuela to help due to this restriction.

And we respectfully ask the United States to continue to sustain its direct support through:

1. Technical assistance for damage and needs assessment.
2. Help with restoring emergency communications.
3. Support for sustained humanitarian airlift.
4. Strategic transport capabilities for relief supplies.
5. Use the resources in the Foreign Government Deposit Funds created under Executive Order 14373 of January 9, 2026, to support the needs of the Venezuelan people and publish information on those uses in a transparent way.
6. Continued cooperation with the United Nations, foreign governments, and specialized humanitarian organizations to keep the response coordinated and accountable.
7. Support for rapid structural safety assessments of buildings, conducted in accordance with internationally recognized standards, so that families can return home and workers to their jobs once standing structures are certified safe.
8. Leadership in planning and financing long-term housing solutions and the re-urbanization of devastated areas, working in coordination with local authorities, other donor governments, and specialized agencies.
9. Reinstate the Temporary Status of Protection for Venezuelans, cease deportations of Venezuelans, and adopt additional measures to protect Venezuelans in need of international protection.

The Venezuelan people are placing their trust in the humanitarian response from the international community, while also relying on the humanitarian and civil society organizations that understand their realities through long-term service in their communities. We would welcome the opportunity to work

through a designated focal point or channel within the State Department to share information from the ground and help ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most. We stand ready to contribute in whatever way may be most useful to this effort.

We ask that support reach the Venezuelan people without delay or conditions, and that the United States remain alongside Venezuelans when this tragedy fades from the world's attention, for the road to recovery will be long and broken institutions will need to be reformed and rebuilt.

Sincerely,

Acceso a la Justicia

Asociación Refugiados Sin Fronteras

CECODAP (Centros Comunitarios de Aprendizaje)

CEDICE Libertad, A.C.

Civilis

Comisión de Justicia y Paz de la Conferencia Episcopal Venezolana (CEV)

Defiende Venezuela

Due Process of Law Foundation (DPLF)

Espacio Público

Laboratorio de Paz

PROVEA (Programa Venezolano de Educación Acción en Derechos Humanos)

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Un Mundo Sin Mordaza

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)