**46th Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Item 4 - Interactive Dialogue with the Fact Finding Mission**

**on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

*10 March 2021*

**Statement by the Czech Republic**

Thank you, Madam President.

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

We thank the Fact Finding Mission for its update and reiterate our full support for its mandate and work.

We remain deeply concerned by the serious human rights violations in Venezuela. This includes ongoing persecution of human rights defenders and independent media, restrictions on humanitarian organizations, arbitrary arrests and excessive use of force.

We call for an end of repression against civil society and media and we urge for an immediate release of all arbitrarily detained persons. The only way out of the deep and complex human rights and humanitarian crises is holding free and fair elections.

Of special concern for us is the continuing deterioration of the rule of law, lack of independence of the judicial system and prevailing impunity for past and ongoing human rights violations and abuses. These violations must not remain unaddressed. Perpetrators must be brought to account. Victims must be provided with justice and reparations.

We reiterate our call for prompt, thorough and independent investigation and determination of individual criminal responsibility by competent judicial authorities, either in a national or international jurisdiction.

*Madame Valiñas, given the lack of independence of the Venezuelan judicial system and continued policy of non - cooperation of the Maduro regime with your mandate, what more can the international community do to assist in addressing accountability and finding justice for victims?*

I thank you.