**GEORGIA**

**Statement by Mr. Irakli Jgenti,**

**Deputy Permanent Representative**

**The 26th Session of the UPR Working Group**

**UPR of Venezuela**

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We remain concerned by the situation of human rights in Venezuela and in this regard call on the Government to undertake prompt and effective measures and strengthen the dialogue with the UN human rights mechanisms and human rights defenders.

We call on the Government to respect the constitutional mechanisms of the country in order to guarantee the rule of law.

Georgia takes note of the establishment of the National Human Rights Council and subsequent Human Rights Plan for 2016-19, however regrets that the elaboration process was not inclusive.

Consequently, Georgia recommends to the Government of Venezuela:

* To issue a standing invitation to the special procedures mandate holders;
* To create a legislative framework for the protection of human rights defenders;
* To guarantee freedom of expression;
* To ratify OPCAT;
* To reverse its decision to withdraw from the American Convention on Human Rights.