

New Expanded Submission Filed Before the International Criminal Court Concerning the Aggravation of the Humanitarian Catastrophe in Venezuela Following the 2026 Earthquake

Dr. **Sergio Alejandro Bustos**, an attorney specializing in International Criminal Law and Human Rights, has filed a new expanded submission before the **Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC)**, presenting new factual and legal elements related to the international investigation concerning the situation in Venezuela.

The submission argues that the tragedy caused by the earthquakes that struck Venezuela during 2026 should not be viewed solely as the inevitable consequence of a natural disaster. Instead, it maintains that the scale of the human and material losses was significantly exacerbated by years of institutional dismantling, the weakening of public institutions, systemic corruption, the deterioration of critical infrastructure, and the State's diminished capacity to respond effectively to large-scale emergencies.

The submission expressly clarifies that **it does not seek to attribute international criminal responsibility for the occurrence of the earthquake itself**, but rather requests that the Office of the Prosecutor examine whether years of actions and omissions by the highest levels of government objectively increased the vulnerability of millions of people and aggravated the foreseeable consequences of the disaster within the broader context already under investigation by the International Criminal Court.

Among the issues addressed, the submission analyzes the progressive weakening of essential State institutions, including the healthcare system, critical infrastructure, civil protection agencies, and other public services indispensable for safeguarding the population during major emergencies. It also presents legal arguments concerning the possible individual responsibility of senior public officials for actions or omissions that may have contributed to the worsening of the humanitarian crisis.

The expanded submission further includes a dedicated chapter addressing the situation of children and adolescents, requesting that the Prosecutor examine the consequences arising from family separation, the disappearance of minors following the disaster, and the increased risks of human trafficking and other forms of exploitation within the broader context currently under investigation by the Court.

This filing forms part of a broader series of international legal actions undertaken by Dr. Sergio Alejandro Bustos before the International Criminal Court, aimed at providing new information, legal analysis, and evidentiary material relating to the investigation of alleged crimes against humanity committed in Venezuela.

This latest submission reaffirms the commitment to continue utilizing the mechanisms of International Criminal Law to contribute to the clarification of the facts, promote accountability for those most responsible, and strengthen the protection of victims in accordance with the principles established by the Rome Statute.

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