

URGENT ACTION

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE'S LIFE AT GRAVE RISK

Since his arbitrary arrest on 29 November 2018, Venezuelan labour rights activist Rubén González, 60, has suffered a series of health crises, but has not yet received adequate care. On 19 January 2020, Rubén González began experiencing hypertension, putting his life at risk, unless he receives urgent medical attention. He is a prisoner of conscience and must be released immediately and unconditionally.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Nicolas Maduro
President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
Palacio de Miraflores
Av. Nte. 10, Caracas 1012, Distrito Capital,
Venezuela
Tel: +58 212-8063111
Twitter: @NicolasMaduro

Dear Nicolás Maduro,

I am very concerned about Rubén González's imprisonment and current health condition.

Rubén González, 60, was detained on 29 November 2018 for peacefully standing for labour rights in Venezuela. He has been denied proper medical attention for over a year and is now faced with a serious medical condition that requires urgent treatments.

Rubén González should not be in prison in the first place, since his work as a trade union leader is allowed under the Venezuelan Constitution, and because the legal process has not been in accordance with international fair trial standards.

Since Rubén González is a Prisoner of Conscience, I demand his immediate and unconditional release; and that as long as he remains in custody, he receives urgent and adequate medical treatment, according to his wishes, and provided by doctors of his choosing.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The arbitrary detention, criminalisation and unfair conviction of Rubén González occurred within the context of widespread arbitrary detentions made against people critical of the government or claiming their human rights.

Venezuelan authorities have implemented a systematic and widespread policy of repression; including carrying out politically motivated arbitrary detentions, targeted extrajudicial executions, and using military courts to charge non-military with discretionary crimes, such as treason or rebellion, towards those who are seen as critical of the government. Human rights defenders and individuals who seek justice for human rights violations have been subjected to targeted attacks and smear campaigns, in an apparent attempt to stifle their human rights work.

In the case of Rubén González, his sustained defence of the labour rights of the state-owned company Ferrominera del Orinoco stands out; including actions on collective bargaining. Moreover, his participation in demonstrations critical to the labour policies of the governments of Hugo Chávez Frías and Nicolás Maduro also put him at risk of being victim of the government's policy of repression.

Rubén González is a trade unionist, who has been arbitrarily detained and subjected to unfair trials on several occasions. In November 2018, he was arbitrarily arrested by the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence (DGCIM) on allegations of having attacked a military officer who tried to arrest him violently. Although he has been condemned, the trial was conducted by a military court, denying his right to a due process. Moreover, there is no reliable evidence of his criminal responsibility. His detention and trial are unfair and therefore he must be released immediately.

Rubén González has suffered from renal failure for more than 10 years, as well as hypertension. His lawyers have repeatedly requested medical attention from the courts, but he has only been transferred for medical treatment once. They do not allow his family to send medication unless González is experiencing severe pain.

On 24 November 2019, his family reported that Rubén González had been in a feverish state for over 72 hours without receiving medical attention. Public pressure finally led to González being taken to a Comprehensive Care Centre (CDI), but he was sent back to prison shortly after.

On 19 January Rubén González began suffering a hypertensive episode.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 6 March 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: He/him/his

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: [n/a]

ADDITIONAL TARGETS: Embassy of Venezuela, 1 Cromwell Rd, South Kensington, London SW7 2HW