

URGENT ACTION

CEASE DETENTIONS AND ATTACKS ON DEFENDERS

After concealing Eduardo Torres' fate and whereabouts since 9 May, high ranking Venezuelan authorities confirmed his detention on 13 May and disclosed he was being held at the infamous El Helicoide in Caracas. Other human rights defenders are also being arbitrarily held in this facility, including Javier Tarazona, Rocío San Miguel, Carlos Julio Rojas, and Kennedy Tejeda. These detentions and related international crimes fall within a systematic attack on civil space and human rights defenders. We call on Nicolás Maduro to immediately release all arbitrarily detained individuals and ensure their rights to life, physical integrity, and fair trial are respected.

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

President of the Republic Nicolas Maduro

Palacio de Miraflores,
Av. Nte. 10, Caracas 1012,
Caracas, Venezuela

Mr Nicolás Maduro,

We take note of the disclosure of Eduardo Torres' detention on 13 May, as stated in an irregular announcement on social media by the Attorney General. Despite also noting other authorities' statements on him being held at the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service center in El Helicoide, Caracas, we remain profoundly concerned about his safety.

We remain equally concerned over the fate and rights of other human rights defenders also arbitrarily detained for their work and activism in El Helicoide, including Javier Tarazona, detained since 2 July 2021; Rocío San Miguel, detained on 9 February 2024 and who requires urgent surgery and rehabilitation; Carlos Julio Rojas, detained since 15 April 2024; and Kennedy Tejeda, detained on 2 August 2024.

Almost 900 other politically motivated arbitrary detainees, including nationals from Spain, the US, Uruguay, Colombia, and Ukraine, amongst other nationalities, are currently being unfairly held in Venezuelan detention centres, suffering an endless list of other human rights violations. These include, but are not limited to, enforced disappearance in the days following their detention, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, denial of trusted legal defence, withholding medical care, incommunicado detention, and being accused of unsubstantiated crimes.

It is also gravely concerning to note that these detentions come hand in hand with smear campaigns and criminalization of human rights organizations and their leaders, such is the case of Oscar Murillo and PROVEA. The harassment, threats and detention of human rights defenders and the attacks on civil society more broadly must cease immediately, including by repealing the so-called 'anti-NGO law' as well as other abusive and arbitrary legislation.

We insist in reminding all Venezuelan authorities that these possible crimes under international law and grave human rights violations are being monitored and scrutinized by international justice and accountability mechanisms, including the UN and the International Criminal Court.

We call for the immediate and unconditional release of Eduardo Torres, Javier Tarazona, Rocío San Miguel, Carlos Julio Rojas, and Kennedy Tejeda, and all arbitrary detainees in Venezuela, and that you ensure their rights to life, physical integrity, and to a fair trial. Finally, we demand a stop to all attacks on civic space.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Nicolás Maduro's government's long-standing policy of repression to silence any form of real or perceived dissent reached a historic peak after the 28 July 2024 election, which saw over [2,000 people arbitrarily detained](#) for political reasons, many of them charged with seemingly unfounded counts of terrorism and incitement of hatred, including vulnerable groups such as [children and people living with disabilities](#). According to the local organization Foro Penal, as of 9 May 2025, at least 894 people remain arbitrarily detained for political reasons, including 89 women, five teenagers, and 66 whose fate and whereabouts are reportedly unknown.

Within this policy of repression, the government has continually harassed, prosecuted and censored activists and civil society organizations working to protect the rights of Venezuelans amidst a complex humanitarian emergency and a deep human rights crisis that is making Venezuelans flee in unprecedented numbers in search of safety and protection. By May 2025, [7.9 million](#) had fled Venezuela.

As Amnesty International has repeatedly denounced, human rights defenders in Venezuela are at a constant risk of harassment, attacks and detention. Nicolás Maduro's government is currently pursuing several initiatives to control and silence human rights and civil society organizations. The [law adopted](#) in August 2024 titled 'Law for the audit, regularization, action and financing of non-governmental and related organizations', or so-called 'anti-NGO law', imposes strict controls that include handing over lists of members and personnel and their assets, lists of donors, and registration of financial movements. Non-compliance with registration requirements could lead to the closure of civil society organizations and possible criminal prosecutions. The bill's provisions began entering into force starting in February 2025.

Since 2020, reports from the UN independent international [fact-finding mission](#) on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (FFM) have thoroughly documented hundreds of cases of extrajudicial executions; enforced disappearances; arbitrary detentions; and torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment committed in the country since 2014; as well as the ways in which the justice system serves as a tool for the government's policy of repression, concluding that some of these international crimes and human rights violations amount to crimes against humanity. Specifically in 2024, the FFM concluded that it has "reasonable grounds to believe that the crime of persecution on political grounds has been committed during the timeframe covered by its mandate".

Since November 2021, the Office of the [Prosecutor](#) of the [International Criminal Court](#) is conducting a criminal investigation into the situation in Venezuela, specifically regarding the "[c]rimes against humanity of deprivation of liberty or other serious deprivation of physical liberty (...); torture (...); rape and/or other forms of sexual violence of comparable severity (...); and politically motivated persecution against persons detained (...), which were committed since at least April 2017, by members of the State security forces, civil authorities and pro-government persons (or groups called "collectives").

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 21 November 2025

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Venezuelan human rights defenders (they/them)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr53/9384/2025/en/

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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Salutation: Your Excellency