

URGENT ACTION

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR DROPS TERRORISM CHARGES

The Chilean Minister of Interior submitted an application to the court for the crimes of four Indigenous Mapuche men to be reclassified and no longer considered “terrorist crimes”. The men are accused of having burned down an Evangelical church.

Benito Trangol Galindo, Alfredo Tralcal Coche, Pablo Trangol Galindo, and Ariel Trangol Galindo have been held in pre-trial detention in the prison of Temuco, in the Araucanía region of Chile since 10 June 2016, following accusations of having burned down an Evangelical church the day before. Their case has been placed under the Chilean Counter-Terrorism Act, even though international human rights mechanisms have established that the definition of “terrorist crimes” should be confined exclusively to activities related to the use of deadly or serious violence against civilians.

The Chilean Counter-Terrorism Act has been extensively criticized due to the fact that it uses an extremely broad interpretation of the term “terrorist crimes”, allows for the use of “anonymous witnesses” and lengthy pre-trial detention, and provides special investigative powers to the public prosecutor.

The four men’s health began to deteriorate because of the hunger strike they started to protest the number of procedural and substantive disadvantages they had faced in this case. Subsequently on 30 September 2017, the Minister of Interior responded by announcing the submission of an application to the court for their crimes to be reclassified and no longer considered “terrorist crimes”. After this statement, Alfredo Tralcal Coche, Pablo Trangol Galindo, and Ariel Trangol Galindo ended their hunger strike, even though the Attorney General’s Office still classifies the charges against them as “terrorism”.

No further action is required of the UA network at this time. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 234/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr22/7177/2017/en/

Name: Alfredo Tralcal Coche, Benito Trangol Galindo, Pablo Trangol Galindo, and Ariel Trangol Galindo

Gender m/f: m

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