

# URGENT ACTION

## OMBUDSMAN'S LIFE AT RISK AFTER DEATH THREATS

The life and personal integrity of Ombudsman Freddy Carrión and his family are at risk. He recently received repeated death threats, including a bomb threat at his family's home on 13 February. Even though he publicly denounced this situation, the Ecuadorian government has failed to protect him and his family. The Ombudsman stated that this is a retaliation for his human rights work during the crisis in October 2019. We call the Attorney General to grant immediate protection to him and his family and to investigate these threats in an immediate, impartial and independent manner.

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

**Diana Salazar, Attorney General**  
Juan León Mera N19-36 y Av. Patria,  
Edificio Fiscalía General del Estado, Quito, Ecuador  
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Dear Attorney General,

*I am writing you in relation to the risk to the life and personal integrity of Ombudsman Freddy Carrión and his family. This is consequence of the repeated death threats he and his family have received in retaliation to his human rights work. Despite filing a criminal complaint on 6 February, he and his family have not received adequate protection yet.*

*This situation has undermined the work of the Ombudsman's Office. Under international law, Ecuadorian authorities have the obligation to guarantee a free and safe environment for human rights defenders.*

***I urge you to grant immediate protection to Ombudsman Freddy Carrión and his family in consultation with them, to investigate these threats in an immediate, impartial and independent manner and to bring those suspected of criminal responsibility to justice. This means also identifying the intellectual perpetrators.***

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 6 February, the Ombudsman filed a criminal complaint before the Attorney General's Office for a series of threats he had received recently and requested protection for him and his family.

On 11 February, the Ombudsman's Office issued a public statement denouncing threats, unfounded accusations and politically motivated attacks received by the Ombudsman through the media and social networks. The institution asserted that these incidents were retaliation for its work in documenting the human rights violations during the crisis in October 2019.

On 13 February around noon, while the Ombudsman was in the city of Guayaquil, the security guard of the residential complex where he lives in Quito with his family received a call indicating that there was a bomb in his home.

On 14 February, the Ombudsman stated that in addition to the personal attacks he has received the Ombudsman's office has suffered a series of attacks in an attempt to affect the credibility of the institution, along with administrative obstacles attempting to undermine the effective realization of its work.

The Ombudsman told a media outlet today that the threats were "essentially due to [the fact that] the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) report was published establishing that the Ecuadorian state is responsible for excessive use of force" in the context of the national strike in October 2019.

On 14 January, the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights presented its observations from its visit to Ecuador, in which it urged the authorities to promptly and comprehensively investigate all reports of violence and establish the appropriate penalties, both in terms of reports of excessive use of force by police officers and security forces and also of incidents of attacks and looting by a proportion of the population.

### Reference materials:

Press release, *Ecuador: Government must protect life and integrity of Ombudsman*, 14 February 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/02/ecuador-gobierno-debe-proteger-defensor-del-pueblo/>

### PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

### PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [31 March 2020]

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

### NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Freddy Carrión (he)

### LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: [N/A]