

PUBLIC

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Fear for

VENEZUELALuis Martínez, aged 27 (m)
Marvin Rangel, aged 20 (m)
Maiker Enrique Duno, aged 19 (m)

The three men named above were arbitrarily detained and beaten by police in Sucre on 30 April. The police threatened to kill them if they reported what had happened. Since then the same police officers have been harassing them, and Amnesty International believes their lives may be in danger.

The 30 April incident occurred when Sucre municipal policemen in plain clothes stopped the men and then took them to the main police station in Sucre in a white jeep with no number plates. There, ten plainclothes officers made them kneel down, and beat them repeatedly around the head and upper body, using fists and hard objects. They were also kicked all over their bodies. The officers told the young men that if they reported what had happened, they would kill them.

The victims were apparently kept in a room at the station for several hours. The police accused them of being "azotes de barrio" (scum of the neighbourhood) and "ladrones de camionetas" (van thieves) before they let them go.

Since then, the young men have reported that some of the same police officers are attempting to intimidate them. Some of the officers have waited near where the men work, and stared at them in a threatening manner.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Venezuelan Constitution expressly prohibits the use of torture, but the government has not passed any legislation to make acts of torture a criminal offence.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish, English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Luis Martínez, Marvin Rangel and Maiker Enrique Duno, who were allegedly beaten and threatened by Sucre municipal police on 30 April, and asking the authorities to take action to protect them;
- calling on the authorities to carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threats, physical abuse and intimidation experienced by the young men, to publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- urging the authorities to implement a law to prevent and punish acts of torture and emphasising that such a law should be drafted in consultation with non-governmental human rights groups in Venezuela.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General

Fiscal general de la República, Dr. Isaías Rodríguez
Avenida Universidad, Esquina Pele el ojo a Misericordia,
frente a Parque Carabobo, Caracas, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 212 576 44 19

Salutation: Estimado Señor Fiscal General/Dear Attorney General

Human Rights Ombudsman

Defensoría del Pueblo

Dr. Germán Mundaraín

Bellas Artes comienzo Avenida México frente al Ateneo de Caracas

Plaza Morelos

Caracas, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 212 575 4467 (if a voice answers, say "tono de fax por favor")

Email: gmundarain@defensoria.gov.ve

Salutation: Estimado Señor/Dear Sir

Municipal Police

Policía Municipal de Sucre

Director Comandante Manuel Antonio Sotillo

Dirección Parte alta de La Urbina, calle El Samán,

El Coliseo

(no fax available)

Salutation: Estimado Señor/Dear Sir

Municipal Mayor

Alcaldía del Municipio Sucre

Alcalde José Vicente Rancel Avalos

Dirección: Zona Colonial de Petare, Palacio Municipal piso 01 Despacho

Municipal. Frente a la Plaza de Sucre.

Fax: +58 212 271 1867

Salutation: Estimado Señor/Dear Sir

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Group

Red de Apoyo por

la Justicia y Paz

Parque Central

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Ofic. 220, Parque Central

Caracas, VENEZUELA

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and to diplomatic representatives of Venezuela accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.