

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST IN DANGER FROM SON'S KILLERS

Venezuelan human rights defender Víctor Martínez is in danger, as the two men on trial for the murder of his son are free: one has escaped and the other was given parole.

Víctor Martínez has spent years drawing attention to corruption and human rights violations by local police in the western state of Lara. He has been attacked repeatedly since his son Mijail was killed in 2009. In July 2010, he reported that while distributing flyers about the killing of his son, he was hit by a man and kicked in the stomach. In January 2012, he reported that another man approached him at the gate of his home and pulled out a gun, at the same spot where his son was shot. Víctor Martínez pushed him away and screamed for help and the man left. Víctor Martínez and his family received some police protection in 2011, but this was discontinued after the arrest of the two men. However, the attempt in 2012, and the fact that the two main suspects are now free, show that Víctor Martínez and his family still need protection.

Mijail Martínez was an audiovisual producer documenting cases of human rights abuse for the Committee of Victims Against Impunity in the state of Lara (Comité de Víctimas contra la Impunidad del estado Lara, COVICIL). He was shot dead on 26 November 2009, while working on a documentary about people who had suffered human rights violations at the hands of police. He was killed by two men who had asked to speak to his father at his home in the state capital, Barquisimeto. Both men were arrested in 2011 and have been detained during their trial. However, one of them apparently escaped in July this year, and the other one was released on bail in August. In Venezuela detainees can be released on bail if after two years their trial has not concluded.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to protect Víctor Martínez and his family, in accordance with their wishes;
- Calling on them to order a full and impartial investigation into the killing of Mijail Martínez and the repeated attacks on Víctor Martínez which appear to be in reprisal for their work as human rights defenders on behalf of relatives of people alleged to have been killed or subjected to enforced disappearance by police officers in Lara state;
- Calling on them to disclose what progress has been made in investigations of complaints regarding killings and enforced disappearances by police officers in Lara state.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 SEPTEMBER 2013 TO:

Governor of Lara state

Henri Falcón Fuentes
 Gobernador del estado Lara
 Carrera 19 esquina con calle 23, Edificio
 Sede Gobernación del Estado Lara piso 9
 Barquisimeto, Lara, Venezuela
 Email: hfalcon@lara.gob.ve

Salutation: Señor Ministro/

Dear Minister

Attorney General of the Republic

Dra. Luisa Ortega Díaz
 Fiscalía General de la República
 Edificio Sede Principal del Ministerio
 Público, Esquinas de Misericordia a Pele El
 Ojo Avenida México, Caracas, Venezuela
 Email: ministeriopublico@mp.gob.ve
 Fax: +58 212 578 3239

Salutation: Dra. Fiscal / Dear Prosecutor

And copies to:

COFAVIC, Av. Urdaneta,
 Esquina El Candillito, Edificio El Candil, piso
 1, Oficina 1-A. Apartado postal 16150.
 C.P.1011-A. La Candelaria, Caracas,
 Venezuela.
 Email: cofavic@cofavic.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

COVICIL is a human rights organization based in Lara founded in 2004. Víctor Martínez is a former member of the Lara state Legislative Council, and he has supported the work of COVICIL since it began. During his tenure on the Legislative Council, he often spoke out publicly against police officers suspected of acts of corruption and human rights violations.

Víctor Martínez featured in UA 339/09 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/008/2009/en>) and update (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/008/2010/en>) after his son was killed.

Name: Víctor Martínez, his family

Gender m/f: both

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