

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS ON CUBA TO MAKE PUBLIC THE EVIDENCE AGAINST TOMÁS NÚÑEZ MADARIAGA

Amnesty International is concerned for the health of Cuban activist, Tomás Núñez Madariaga, currently on a prolonged hunger strike and calls on the Cuban authorities to make public the evidence against him.

Tomás Núñez Madariaga, a member of the unofficial political opposition group “Patriotic Union of Cuba” (Unión Patriótica de Cuba, UNPACU) is on a prolonged hunger strike and, according to his family, in a critical condition. Tomás was allegedly found guilty of threatening a state official. His family say that they have not received a copy of the ruling and that Tomás has no access to a lawyer.

In the light of his current state, Erika Guevara-Rosas said:

“Yet another UNPACU activist – this time Tomás Núñez Madariaga - has been detained by the Cuban authorities and is on a prolonged hunger-strike and in a critical condition. The Cuban authorities have a legal obligation to publicly reveal the evidence against him and must do so immediately. The international community is monitoring this case.”

This occurs just two months after the leader of UNPACU, José Daniel Ferrer García, spent 11 days in a Cuban jail with no access to his family. Last month, at the UN, Cuba refused recommendations from other UN members to accept independent monitors into its prisons and to strengthen the independence of the judicial system.

People who have been detained for exercising their freedom of expression or peaceful assembly in Cuba repeatedly tell Amnesty International about the difficulties they face in accessing a lawyer of their choice and criticize the lack of independence of public lawyers who often fail to exercise due diligence in their cases. Defence lawyers almost never provide families with copies of court documents, creating significant barriers for victims in accessing justice at the national and international level.

Earlier this month, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe called on the Cuban government to improve access to independent lawyers in Cuba and ensure all lawyers can perform their professional duties without fear of reprisals.