



## PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE ROSMIT MANTILLA MUST BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY.

This Sunday 13 December 2015, Rosmit Mantilla will celebrate his 33 birthday. He should not spend his birthday or one more day behind bars, away from his loved ones. His detention for over a year and a half is based on unfounded politically motivated accusations. Rosmit Mantilla is a prisoner of conscience and should be released immediately and unconditionally.

Rosmit Mantilla is a lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender and intersex (LGBTI) rights activist and member of the opposition Popular Will (Voluntad Popular) party. Rosmit Mantilla has been in pre-trial detention since 2 May 2014 unjustly held at the National Intelligence Service (Servicio Bolivariano de Inteligencia Nacional, SEBIN) in Caracas, despite the lack of credible evidence that linked him to the crimes of which he is accused

The Public Prosecutor's Office has charged Rosmit Mantilla of public incitement and intimidation, obstructing a public highway, arson involving public and private buildings, violent damage and conspiracy to commit a crime, in the context of the anti-government protests that took place between February and July 2014.

The charges are based on a statement by an unidentified individual alleging that Rosmit Mantilla had received funds in order to finance the anti-government protests and on evidence the National Intelligence Service officials claim to have found during a search of Rosmit Mantilla's home, such as leaflets urging people to join the protests and envelopes containing money.

Amnesty International considers that the Public Prosecutor's Office has failed to present credible evidence linking Rosmit Mantilla to the crimes of which he is accused. For example, the charges of public incitement, arson involving public and private buildings, violent damage are based on the fact that he had leaflets urging people to join the anti-government protests.

On 30 January 2015, after nine months of pre-trial detention and procedural delays, the investigating judge ordered that there was sufficient evidence and that Rosmit Mantilla should face trial. Nearly a year after this ruling, the trial is advancing at a slow pace amid concerns of undue delays

It is urgent that Rosmit Mantilla be released immediately and unconditionally. He has neither used nor advocated violence.

### ACT NOW!

Please write to the Venezuelan authorities calling them to:

- To release Rosmit Mantilla, a prisoner of conscience, immediately and unconditionally.

Please send your appeals to:

#### Vice-President of the Republic

Sr. Jorge Arreaza  
Email: [vicepresidencia@venezuela.gov.ve](mailto:vicepresidencia@venezuela.gov.ve)  
Twitter: @jaarreaza

#### The Attorney General of the Republic

Dra. Luisa Ortega Díaz  
Email: [ministeriopublico@mp.gob.ve](mailto:ministeriopublico@mp.gob.ve)  
Twitter: @lortegadiaz

#### Ombudsman

Sr. Tarek William Saab  
Email: [contacto@defensoria.gob.ve](mailto:contacto@defensoria.gob.ve)  
Twitter: @TarekWilliamSaab

### **Additional Information**

Rosmit Mantilla is part of the Pro-Inclusion Movement, a group that promotes the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) within the opposition party People's Will.

Protests for and against the government were held between February and July 2014 and resulted in at least 43 deaths and 878 people injured, including members of the security forces. In addition, 3,300 people were arrested, of which the vast majority were released, although some of them are facing trial for their alleged involvement in violence during the protests.

The leader of Popular Will, Leopoldo Lopez, was sentenced to nearly 14 years in prison on 10 September 2015, based on unfounded accusations of inciting violence during anti-government protests in February 2014. His trial, by a judicial system that lacks independence, was unfair and politically motivated. As Rosmit Mantilla, Amnesty International considers that Leopoldo Lopez is a prisoner of conscience and is demanding his immediate and unconditional release.

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