

# URGENT ACTION

## PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE'S LIFE AT GRAVE RISK

Since his arbitrary arrest on 29 November 2018, Venezuelan labour rights activist Rubén González, 60, has suffered a series of health crises, but never receiving adequate care. On 19 January 2020, Rubén González began experiencing a grave peak of hypertension, putting his life at risk unless he receives urgent medical attention. He is a prisoner of conscience and must be released immediately and unconditionally.

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

**Nicolas Maduro**  
**President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**  
Palacio de Miraflores  
Av. Nte. 10, Caracas 1012, Distrito Capital,  
Venezuela  
Tel: +58 212-8063111  
Twitter: @NicolasMaduro

Dear Nicolás Maduro,

*I am very concerned about Rubén González's imprisonment and current health condition.*

*Rubén González (60) was detained on 29 November 2018 for peacefully standing for labour rights in Venezuela. For over one year he had been denied proper medical attention and now is going through a serious medical condition that requires urgent treatments.*

*Rubén González should not be in prison in the first place, his work as a trade union leader is granted in the Venezuelan Constitution and the whole legal process has been unfair.*

*Since Rubén González is a Prisoner of Conscience, I demand his immediate and unconditional release. Also, as long as he is being unfairly kept in custody, he must receive the urgent and adequate medical treatments he needs, according to his wishes, and provided by doctors of his trust.*

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The arbitrary detention, criminalization and unfair conviction of Rubén González occurs in a context of widespread arbitrary detentions made against people critical of the government or claiming their human rights.

Venezuelan authorities have implemented a systematic and widespread policy of repression, including carrying out politically motivated arbitrary detentions, targeted extrajudicial executions, and using military courts to charge non-military with discretionary crimes such as treason or rebellion, towards those who are seen as critical of the government. Human rights defenders and individuals who seek justice for human rights violations have been subjected to targeted attacks and smear campaigns, in an apparent attempt to stifle their human rights work.

In the case of Rubén González, his sustained defence of the labour rights of the state-owned company Ferrominera del Orinoco stands out, including actions on collective bargaining. Moreover, his participation in demonstrations critical to the labour policies of the governments of Hugo Chávez Frías and Nicolás Maduro also put him at risk of being victim of the government's policy of repression.

Rubén González is a trade unionist who has been arbitrarily detained and subjected to unfair trials in several occasions. On November 2018 he was arbitrarily arrested by the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence (DGCIM) on the allegation of having attacked a military officer who tried to arrest him violently. Although he has been condemned, the trial was conducted by a military court denying his right to a due process. Moreover, there is no reliable evidence of his criminal responsibility. His detention and trial are unfair and therefore he must be released immediately.

Rubén González has suffered from renal failure for more than 10 years, as well as hypertension. His lawyers have repeatedly requested medical attention to the courts, but only once was he transferred to receive medical attention. They do not allow his family to send medication unless González is experiencing severe pain.

On November 24, 2019, his family reported that Rubén González had been in a feverish state for over 72 hours without receiving medical attention. Public pressure finally led to González being taken to a Comprehensive Care Centre (CDI), but was sent back to prison shortly after.

On 19 January Rubén González began suffering a hypertensive episode.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 2 APRIL 2020

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

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** He/him/his

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** [n/a]