

URGENT ACTION

GOVERNMENT BACK TRACKS ON THREATS TO NGOS

On 3 May 2021, and after outrage from international and local civil society, as well as international organizations, the Venezuelan government issued a new administrative regulation reversing arbitrary provisions that threatened NGOs, survivors and beneficiaries in the country with criminalisation and discrimination.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

In late March 2021, Nicolás Maduro's government published an administrative regulation requiring the registration of all natural or legal persons of a nonfinancial nature before 1 May, emphasizing the obligation of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to register in order to ensure the surveillance and supervision of their work. The regulation as published, imposed strict and abusive controls that included listing all their beneficiaries and other organizations with whom they work with. In case of non-compliance, NGOs could face criminal charges and non-specific sanctions from the Law against Organized Crime and the Financing of Terrorism.

A few days after its entry into force, on 3 May, the government issued a new administrative regulation changing the core concerns that NGOs and international organizations condemned publicly and in conflict with human rights standards.

Public pressure by Amnesty International, local partners and international organizations, including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), had a direct impact in the government reversing its attack on civil society and striking this regulation down. Although the regulation still requires NGOs in Venezuela to register and concerns remain over the use of the Law against Organized Crime and the Financing of Terrorism to control civil society organizations, lack of compliance with the regulation does no longer imply an explicit criminal sanction.

This step back in the policy of repression comes in a context in which the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced that by June 2021 it would announce whether it would open an investigation into crimes against humanity in Venezuela.

We will continue to monitor and mobilize against any governmental attempt to impede the right to defend rights in Venezuela.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Venezuelan NGOs (They/ their/ them)

THIS IS THE SECOND UA AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 046/21

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr53/4013/2021/en/>