

URGENT ACTION

POLICE THREATEN TO KILL MORE OF BARRIOS FAMILY

Venezuelan police have threatened to kill another member of the Barrios family, who are receiving protection as 10 of them have been murdered since 1998 in circumstances that suggest police involvement.

Lilia Isabel Solórzano Barrios has reported that three Aragua state police officers forced their way into her home on 12 September, without presenting a warrant. There they found her nephew **Víctor Cabrera Barrios**. The officers told him they know where he lives and that he should be careful because they will kill him next time they see him. The family believes that the threats are due to their continuous demands for justice, effective protection measures, and reparations, including at a hearing before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights last May.

As part of measures agreed with the state after the 2011 Inter-American Court ruling on the case, Víctor Cabrera Barrios and other members of the Barrios family have been assigned public housing in the same area to facilitate the delivery of protection measures. Their whereabouts are supposed to be confidential, but only a few months after relocating, the family have been threatened again.

According to Lilia Isabel Solórzano Barrios, the police officers said that they could do what they wanted and did not care about the protection measures ordered by the Inter-American Court, because Venezuela retired from its jurisdiction earlier this month. Even though Venezuela has now withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Court, the state is still obliged to comply with all sentences issued so far and with any rulings on cases that have taken place up until its withdrawal from the American Convention came into force, on 10 September. Amnesty International has expressed concern at this withdrawal and has asked Venezuela to reverse this decision.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urge the authorities to take decisive action to protect all members of the Barrios family, in accordance with the Inter-American Court decision and the family's wishes;
- Demand that they comply with all aspects of the Inter-American Court's ruling, including the protection measures, investigation into the killings and comprehensive reparations, and reminding them that Venezuela is bound by all the Court's decisions so far, as well as any future decision regarding cases that occurred up until 10 September 2013;
- Call on them to reverse Venezuela's decision to retire from the Inter-American Convention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 OCTOBER 2013 TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Eliás Jaua Milano
Ministro del Poder Popular para
Relaciones Exteriores
Av. Urdaneta, Torre MRE
Caracas, Venezuela
Fax: +58 212 806 4579
Salutation: Dear Minister / Sr Ministro

Governor of Aragua State

Tareck el Assaimi
Gobernador de Aragua
Av. Las Delicias, Antigua sede
Edificio Corpoindustria, Piso 7
Maracay, Municipio Girardot
Aragua, Venezuela
**Salutation: Dear Governor /
Sr. Gobernador**

And copies to:

Aragua-based NGO

Comisión de Derechos Humanos de
Justicia y Paz del Estado Aragua
Calle Negro Primero, Oeste
N 98, frente al Liceo 'Valentin Espinal',
Cruce con Av. Ayacucho
Maracay, Estado Aragua,
Venezuela

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 134/13. Further information:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/007/2013/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ten members of the Barrios family, from Venezuela's state of Aragua, have been killed since 1998, allegedly by police officers. Several other members of the family have suffered multiple forms of intimidation, harassment, threats and attacks by the police. The surviving members of the family are at risk of reprisals for their attempts to obtain justice for these crimes.

Little progress is known to have been made in the investigations and prosecution of these murders: most of them are in the early stages of investigation or prosecution, one has been archived, and only in the case of Narciso Barrios have two officials been found guilty of his murder. No investigations are known to have been carried out into the family's complaints regarding death threats and intimidation from state police officers.

The case was submitted to the Inter-American Human Rights system in 2004. That year, the Inter-American Commission issued the first protection measures order, after which the Inter-American Court issued other protection measures. The Court ruled in November 2011 that the Venezuelan state had violated the rights to life, physical integrity and freedom of several members of the Barrios family and ruled that the state had to provide effective protection measures for the family, carry out thorough and impartial investigations, bring those responsible to justice and provide financial and other types of reparations to them (such as education and medical care).

Names: Roni Barrios, Benito Barrios, Narciso Barrios, Luis Alberto Barrios, Rigoberto Barrios, Oscar Barrios, Wilmer José Barrios, Juan José Barrios, Víctor Tomás Barrios, Jorge Antonio Barrios, Eloisa Barrios, Lilia Isabel Solórzano Barrios, Víctor Cabrera Barrios

Gender m/f: All male; except Eloisa Barrios and Lilia Isabel Solórzano Barrios (f)

Further information on UA: 134/13 Index: AMR 53/015/2013 Issue Date: 19 September 2013