

URGENT ACTION

POLICE THREATEN AND INTIMIDATE BARRIOS FAMILY

Venezuelan police have raided Beatriz Adriana Guzmán Barrios' house and arrested her husband. The Barrios family have received further threats even though they should be protected in accordance with an Inter-American Court ruling. Ten members of their family have been murdered since 1998 in circumstances that suggest police involvement with almost total impunity.

Beatriz Adriana Guzmán Barrios has reported that her home was raided without a search warrant on 17 September at around 10.30pm by seven people in plain clothes who had police identification cards. Her husband, Dany Rafael Bolívar Montevideo, was taken into police custody without an arrest warrant. He was released after a few hours, but the police officers told him "next time it will be much worse" (*la próxima vez lo [pasara] bien mal*). According to the family, just minutes earlier the same police officers had visited the home of Beatriz Adriana's mother, Eloisa Barrios, demanding access to her house. She refused them entry as no search warrant was provided. Eloisa has lead the family efforts to demand justice for the crimes against her family.

Dany Rafael Bolívar Montevideo was later summoned by the local prosecutor's office to appear before the police's disciplinary unit to identify those responsible for his arrest. Eloisa Barrios who was waiting for him outside the police station, was able to overhear a police officer saying on his phone: "We must plant some drugs to this telltale person so he stop denouncing" (*A ese pajúo [persona delatora] hay que plantarle droga para que no siga denunciando*). At that time Dany was the only person making a statement in the police unit.

According to reports, on 11 March Beatriz Adriana was threatened at gunpoint by two people who were looking for her brother. The same people visited her house on 26 March. Beatriz Adriana decided to exchange houses with another relative. Although she has been able to identify the men, the Barrios family are not aware of any progress in the investigations.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging 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;
- Calling the authorities to carry a full and impartial investigation into the latest act of intimidation and harassment reported by Beatriz Adriana Guzmán Barrios and her family and make the results public;
- Demanding 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.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 NOVEMBER 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice and Interior

Gral. Miguel Rodríguez Torres
Ministerio del Poder Popular para
Relaciones Exteriores, Justicia y Paz
Av. Urdaneta, Edificio Interior y Justicia
Caracas, Venezuela
Fax: +58 212 506 1685
Email: asistenciadirecta3@gmail.com

Salutation: Señor Ministro/

Dear Minister

Attorney General of the Republic

Dra. Luisa Ortega Díaz
Edificio Sede Principal de Ministerio
Público,
Esquinas de Misericordia a Pele El Ojo
Av. México. Caracas, Venezuela
Fax: +58 212 578 3239
Email: ministeriopublico@mp.gob.ve
Twitter: @lortegadiaz

Salutation: Sra. Fiscal / Dear

Prosecutor

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
Email: cofavic@cofavic.org

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 second update of UA 134/13. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/015/2013/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 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. The Barrios family believe that the threats and intimidation are due to their continuous demands for justice, effective protection measures, and reparations for the grave human rights violations they have suffered.

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 two officials have 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 on Human Rights 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: Beatriz Adriana Guzmán Barrios (f), Dany Rafael Bolívar Montevideo (m), Eloisa Barrios (f)
Gender: both

Further information on UA: 134/13 Index: AMR 53/019/2014 Issue Date: 26 September 2014