

# URGENT ACTION

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER ATTACKED AGAIN

**Víctor Martínez, a human rights defender in Barquisimeto, Lara State, has been attacked by two armed men. He and his family may be at risk of further attacks.**

On 6 April human rights defender **Víctor Martínez** was confronted by two armed men outside his home in Barquisimeto, Lara State. He was on his way home from a meeting with different civil society organizations where they were organizing activities in response to the human rights violations that occurred during protests over the last year in Venezuela. At around 8.30pm Víctor Martínez saw two men approaching as he was trying to park his car outside his home. He initially thought they were heading toward his neighbour's house but suddenly approached his car and pointed their guns at him.

Víctor Martínez cried for help and after struggling with one of the two men he managed to drive away in his car. He went to make a formal complaint to the police. The following day he made a complaint before the Public Prosecution's local offices. Since 8 April he has been receiving protection from the police.

Víctor Martínez has been attacked on a number of occasions, including after the death of his son, Mijail Martínez, in 2009. Mijail Martínez was shot dead outside his parents' home on 26 November 2009 in Venezuela, while working on a documentary film about people who have suffered human rights violations at the hands of police officers. For many years, Víctor Martínez has worked to combat corruption and human rights violations committed by the police in Lara State.

### **Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:**

- Calling on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the attack on Víctor Martínez which appear to be in reprisal for his work as a human rights defender;
- Urging them to take all appropriate measures to guarantee the right to life and physical integrity of Víctor Martínez and his family, in accordance with their wishes;
- Reminding them to fulfil their obligation to protect human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 MAY 2015 TO:**

#### Governor of Lara state

Henri Falcón Fuentes  
Palacio de Gobierno, Carrera 19 Esquina  
Calle 25  
Barquisimeto, Lara, Venezuela  
Fax: +58 251 232 4631  
Email: henrifalcon@lara.gob.ve

**Salutation: Señor Gobernador/**

**Dear Governor**

#### Senior Prosecutor, Lara State

William José Guerrero Santander  
Fiscal Superior Del Estado Lara  
Antigua sede del HELMBANC, piso 1. Calle  
3 con Av. Lara. Sector Nueva Segobia  
Barquisimeto, Lara, Venezuela  
Email: FSupLara@mp.gob.ve

**Salutation: Señor Fiscal / Dear**

**Prosecutor**

#### **And copies to:**

#### COFAVIC

Av. Urdaneta, Esquina El Candilito, Edificio  
El Candil, piso 1, Oficina 1-A. Apartado  
postal 16150. C.P.1011-A. La Candelaria  
Caracas, Venezuela  
Email: cofavic@cofavic.org

#### Víctor Martínez:

Email: victormartinez200@yahoo.com

### **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 220/13. Further information:

[www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR53/012/2013/en/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR53/012/2013/en/)

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Víctor Martínez has spent years drawing attention to corruption and human rights violations by local police in the western state of Lara. He has been attacked repeatedly since his son Mijail Martínez was killed in 2009. In July 2010, Víctor Martínez reported that while distributing flyers about the killing of his son, he was hit by a man and kicked in the stomach. In January 2012, he reported that another man approached him at the gate of his home and pulled out a gun, at the same spot where his son was shot. Víctor Martínez and his family have received some police protection discontinuously over these past few years but this most recent attack shows that Víctor Martínez and his family still require protection.

Mijail Martínez was an audiovisual producer documenting cases of human rights abuse for the Committee of Victims Against Impunity in the state of Lara (Comité de Víctimas contra la Impunidad del estado Lara, COVICIL). He was shot dead on 26 November 2009, while working on a documentary about people who had suffered human rights violations at the hands of police. He was killed by two men who had asked to speak to his father at his home in the state capital, Barquisimeto. Both men were arrested in 2011 and have been detained during their trial. However, one of them apparently escaped in July 2013, and the other one was released on bail in August 2013. In Venezuela detainees can be released on bail if after two years their trial has not concluded.

Víctor Martínez also featured in UA 339/09 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR53/008/2009/en/>) and update (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR53/008/2010/en/>) when his safety was at risk after his son was killed.

Name: Víctor Martínez

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 220/13 Index: AMR 53/1450/2015 Issue Date: 15 April 2015