

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION MEMBERS AT HIGH RISK OF ATTACK

Renewed attacks on representatives and staff linked to opposition parties in Venezuela's National Assembly began on 20 December 2019. Following events on 5 January 2020, there are serious concerns about the risk of arbitrary detention and other grave human rights violations for all other representatives. This is not the first time that President Nicolas Maduro and his government have intimidated, harassed, physically abused, arbitrarily detained and forcibly disappeared National Assembly representatives and staff in an attempt to silence political dissent.

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

President Nicolas Maduro

Palacio de Miraflores
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Venezuela
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Dear Nicolas Maduro,

I am very concerned about the use of arbitrary detention, excessive force, enforced disappearances, and other grave human rights violations that Amnesty International has documented as part of a policy of repression implemented by your government.

Events starting on 5 January 2020 show that your government is attempting to silence dissent within the National Assembly, arbitrarily using power against the opposition, and threatening basic human rights such as life, integrity and freedom.

I strongly call on you to put to an end the policy of repression against the opposition, guaranteeing and protecting representatives and workers of the National Assembly their civil and political rights.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 5 January 2020, the Venezuelan National Assembly was electing its new board for the new year. This election was held in the context of a policy of repression through which Maduro's authorities harassed, intimidated, and arbitrarily detained National Assembly staff and representatives, as an attempt to hinder civil and political rights.

Amnesty International recently learned of what may amount to the forced disappearance of representative Gilber Caro and Víctor Ugas, both of whom were arrested by alleged state agents on 20 December 2019. While both were presented before a judge, the authorities have denied their relatives any information about their whereabouts.

Smear campaigns and threats against members of the opposition, including against representative Delsa Solórzano, are some examples that add to the persistent harassment and intimidation of opposition representatives and staff of the National Assembly who have been arbitrarily detained. In recent years, dozens of opposition members have been forced to flee the country and request asylum in the face of threats they have received from the Maduro government.

In last year's report, *Hunger for Justice: Crimes against Humanity in Venezuela*, Amnesty International concluded that the selective extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and deaths and injuries caused by the excessive use of force by Nicolás Maduro's government as part of a systematic and widespread policy of repression since at least 2017 may constitute crimes against humanity.

Since 2014 Venezuelans have fled in unprecedented numbers in search of safety and a dignified future abroad. By December 2019, an estimated 4.8 million had fled the country¹ and it is believed that this figure will reach 5.5 million in 2020.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 18 February 2020

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Group (they/them)