

URGENT ACTION

DEMAND ADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR DEFENDER

Human rights defender Víctor Martínez and his family are still at risk as the protection measures granted to him are not being adequately implemented.

Following the latest attack against him on 6 April, human rights defender **Víctor Martínez** began receiving protection from the police in Barquisimeto, Lara State, on 8 April. However, he has complained that he needed to go to the local police station to pick up the police officer in charge of his protection and bring him back in the evening. Víctor Martínez reported being denied protection sometimes, when he did not have a vehicle to transport the police officer to and from the police station. On at least 10 occasions, Víctor Martínez has reported being told in the police station that no one was available to offer him and his family protection for the day.

Víctor Martínez held a meeting with a local representative of the Public Prosecution Service on 13 May to complain formally about police not complying with the protection measures granted to him. Of particular concern is that he and his family are not receiving protection when in and around their home, where most of the attacks against them have taken place. According to Víctor Martínez, the Public Prosecutor denied any responsibility for implementing the protection measures. The Venezuelan legislation that regulates the protection of victims specifies that the Public Prosecution Service has to work with the victim to determine if specific measures are required with regard to the compliance of protection measures.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities 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;
- Calling on them to order a full and impartial investigation into the 6 April attack against Víctor Martínez which appears to have been in reprisal for his work as a human rights defender;
- 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 2 JULY 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:

NGO

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 second update of UA 220/13. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR53/1450/2015/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 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 had suffered human rights violations at the hands of police officers. Mijail Martínez had been 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 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 was released on bail in August 2013. In Venezuela detainees can be released on bail after two years if their trial has not yet concluded.

Víctor Martínez reported that while distributing flyers about the killing of his son in July 2010, 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. On 6 April, Víctor Martínez was confronted by two armed men outside his home in Barquisimeto. He was on his way home from a meeting with civil society organizations. Víctor Martínez and his family have received erratic police protection since then but this most recent attack shows that they still require protection.

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 53/1693/2015 Issue Date: 21 May 2015