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Venezuela: Resolve the crisis by respecting human rights and the constitution
President Hugo Chávez and his administration have a duty to guarantee full respect for human rights and the provisions of the constitution. The next few days will be decisive for Venezuela and the rule of law, Amnesty International said today after the constitutionally-elected President, Hugo Chávez, returned to power.

"It is essential for an urgent investigation to be conducted into the various events that occurred over the last few days during which some 46 people reportedly died and over a hundred were injured. It is crucial that any measures taken to clarify what happened and identify those who were directly or indirectly responsible remain within the framework of the law," the organization added while stressing that "what Venezuela needs to bring it out of the crisis is not revenge but justice and full respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights."

Now that the state authorities have been restored to power, they have an inescapable duty to safeguard human rights for all citizens of the country. The security forces must guard against any breakdown in constitutional order by complying with international standards regarding the use of force.

The fundamental challenge facing the Venezuelan authorities is to ensure that human rights and the guarantees provided under the constitution are fully respected. However, it is clear that the consequences of the tragic events of the last few days can only be overcome if the authorities are actively and permanently committed to fulfilling that obligation.

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