

# URGENT ACTION

## DAD ATTACKED AS HE CALLS FOR JUSTICE FOR SON

**Victor Martínez, the father of a 23 year-old man who was shot dead last year, Mijail Martínez, has been attacked. He was handing out flyers alleging that police and local officials were involved in his son's death. He, his family and his colleagues may be at risk of further attacks.**

On 3 July, **Victor Martínez** was distributing flyers in Barquisimeto, western Venezuela, denouncing the killing of his son, Mijail Martínez, and the alleged involvement of police and local officials in his death. According to the information received by Amnesty International, Victor Martínez was approached by an unknown man, who told him that he could not distribute the flyers there and then hit him. When Victor Martínez fell to the ground, the man apparently then kicked him repeatedly in the stomach.

Víctor Martínez's son, **Mijail Martínez**, was an audio visual 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 in Venezuela, while working on a documentary film about people who have suffered human rights violations at the hands of police officers. He was killed by two unknown men who had asked to speak to his father at his home in Barquisimeto, the capital of Lara state in western Venezuela.

The judicial investigation into Mijail Martínez's death is currently at an early stage. Although some protection has apparently been provided by the state to Victor Martínez and his family, Amnesty International is concerned that the recent attack shows that he is still at risk, seemingly as a result of his work as a human rights defender. Amnesty International believes that Victor Martínez and his family, as well as his colleagues are at risk of further attacks.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Asking the authorities to provide details of the protective measures that they are taking to ensure the safety of Víctor Martínez and his family, as well as other members of COVICIL, according to their wishes;
- Calling on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the recent attack on Víctor Martínez which appears to be in reprisal for his work as a human rights defender on behalf of victims of alleged killings and disappearances by police officers in Lara state;
- Reminding the authorities of the right of human rights defenders to carry out their legitimate activities without any illegitimate restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;
- Calling on the authorities to reveal any progress into investigations of complaints regarding killings and disappearances by police officers in Lara state, including the death of Mijail Martínez on 26 November 2009.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 SEPTEMBER 2010 TO:

#### Minister of Interior and Justice

Ministro de Interior y Justicia  
Tareck El Aissami  
Ministerio del Interior y Justicia,  
Avenida Urdaneta Esquina de Platanal  
Edificio Interior y Justicia Despacho del  
Ministro, Piso 3, Caracas, Venezuela

**Fax: +58 212 506 16 85**

**Salutation: Señor Ministro/Dear  
Minister**

#### Attorney General

Fiscal General, Dra. Luisa Ortega Díaz,  
Fiscalía General de la República,  
Avda. México, Manduca a Pelelojo,  
Edif. Sede Fiscalía General de la  
República, La Candelaria, Caracas,  
Venezuela

**Fax: +58 212 509 8504**

**Email: [mp@fiscalia.gov.ve](mailto:mp@fiscalia.gov.ve)  
Salutation: Señora Fiscal General/  
Dear Attorney General**

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

#### Human Rights Organisations

Comité de Víctimas contra la  
Impunidad de Lara (COFAVIC),  
Avenida Urdaneta, Esquina El Candilito,  
Edificio El Candil, piso 1, Oficina 1-A.  
Apartado postal 16150, Código postal  
1011-A, La Candelaria, Caracas,  
Venezuela.

**Email: [justiciaparamijail@gmail.com](mailto:justiciaparamijail@gmail.com)  
(COVICIL)**

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 339/09. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/amr53/008/2009/en>

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The COVICIL is a human rights organisation based in Lara that was founded in 2004. Víctor Martínez is a former member of the Legislative Council of the state of Lara and he has supported the work of the Committee of Victims Against Impunity since it began. During Víctor Martínez's tenure at the Legislative Council, he often publicly denounced police officers suspected of acts of corruption and human rights violations.

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