



VENEZUELA: VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DURING PROTESTS, DEMAND JUSTICE

MARVINIA JIMÉNEZ – BEATEN UP FOR TAKING PHOTOS OF A DEMONSTRATION



“I don't think I should be beaten up just for recording a demonstration.”

Marvinia Jiménez, aged 36, described to Amnesty International how she was beaten up by a member of the National Guard in Valencia, Carabobo State. On the 24th of February 2014, Marvinia Jiménez was taking photos with her mobile phone of National Guard armoured vehicles breaking up a demonstration near her home. She was surrounded by several officers, one of whom attacked her, hit her with her helmet and pulled her hair. Marvinia Jiménez told Amnesty International she was still in pain several days later.

She was detained for several days. During that time she was not told the reason for her detention nor was she allowed access to her family or lawyer. It was only when she was brought before a judge that she was able to see her family. ***“That's when I was able to speak to my brother, who told me he'd been looking for me for days. I realized I had not been alone and that my family was trying to find out where I was. That's when I could start breathing... The worst thing for me was to see my seven-year-old son at the hearing, seeing me like that and having to explain to him that I had been arrested and beaten up”.***

The Attorney General told Amnesty International that she had requested the detention of the member of the National Guard who ill-treated Marvinia Jiménez. However, nearly a year after the incident, the arrest warrant against the officer believed to be responsible for the attack had yet to be served and she was believed to remain on active service with the National Guard.

Marvinia Jiménez made formal complaints about the intimidation she has suffered. For example, she reported to the Public Prosecution Service that she was being followed in her neighbourhood, near her son's school and around her place of work by unidentified individuals. As a result, on the 12th of March 2014, the supervising court (tribunal de control) ordered that Marvinia Jiménez should receive protection and charged the Valencia Municipal Police with implementing the order. However, protective measures have not been properly put in place. For example, two weeks after the protection order was granted, the Municipal Police argued that they did not have enough officers to comply with the order. At the time of writing Marvinia was not receiving any form of police protection.

The pro and anti-government protests that took place between February and July 2014 left at least 43 people dead and 878 people injured. Amnesty International has documented many cases in which law enforcement officials used excessive force against demonstrators as well as passers-by and people living in the neighbourhoods where protests were taking place. The information gathered indicates that law enforcement officials frequently saw dispersing protests, including peaceful protests, as a priority and used force to do so, often without attempting to negotiate with the

demonstrators or giving a clear prior warning.¹

Amnesty International has been able to determine that in most cases victims and their relatives have expressed a lack of confidence in their ability to get justice and are afraid of reporting abuses because they fear possible reprisals. In several cases, the victims live in the same neighbourhoods as the alleged abusers, who remain on active service, and have been the targets of intimidation and harassment. Even in those cases where victims and their families have been granted protection, measures in accordance with their wishes have not always been implemented.

¹ For more information on the February to July 2014 events, see the following Amnesty International reports: *Venezuela: Human rights at risk amid protests* (Index: AMR 53/009/2014), available at <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/009/2014/en>; and *Venezuela: Briefing to the UN Committee Against Torture, 53rd session, November 2014* (Index: AMR 53/020/2014), available at <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR53/020/2014/en>.

ACT NOW!

Write to the Venezuelan authorities urging them to:

- Carry out a thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the beating and other ill-treatment of Marvinia Jiménez and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.
- Protect Marvinia Jiménez and her family, in accordance with their wishes, from violence, threats of violence and any other form of intimidation that may arise as a result of the investigation.
- Guarantee comprehensive reparations to Marvinia Jiménez and her family, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

Send your appeals to:

Vice-president of the Republic

Sr. Jorge Arreaza
Vicepresidencia de la República
Esq. Carmelitas, Avenida Urdaneta,
Caracas, Venezuela.
Email: vicepresidencia@venezuela.gov.ve
ciudadano@vicepresidencia.gov.ve
Salutation: Dear Vice-president

Attorney General of the Republic

Dra. Luisa Ortega Díaz
Edificio Sede Principal del Ministerio Público,
Esquinas de Misericordia a Pele El Ojo
Caracas, Venezuela
Email: ministeriopublico@mp.gob.ve
Fax: +58 212 578 3239
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Minister of the Interior, Justice and Peace

Almirante en Jefa Carmen Teresa Meléndez Rivas
Ministerio del Poder Popular para las
Relaciones Interiores, Justicia y Paz.
Edificio Sede del Ministerio, Avenida México
Caracas, Venezuela
Email: mijcudecon@gmail.com
Fax: +58 212 506-1558
Salutation: Dear Minister

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