

URGENT ACTION

DETAINEES AT RISK OF UNFAIR TRIAL

53 people detained in anti-government demonstrations might face an unfair trial as their lawyers have not been given adequate time to prepare their defence.

On 18 September, the police detained around 60 people in and around the secondary school Instituto Nacional Mejía, in the capital, Quito, during anti-government demonstrations. On 2 October, 53 of them are due to stand trial charged with "damage to other people's property" (*daños a bien ajeno*) under a new system to speed up judicial proceedings. Their lawyers will request the trial to be postponed as they argue that they have not had adequate time to prepare the defence but fear their request might be rejected. Their right to fair trial might be compromised.

The detainees have complained that the police physically and psychologically abused them during their arrest and while in police custody. Their lawyers presented a habeas corpus appeal based on the detainees' claims of torture and other ill-treatment, which was denied at a hearing on 25 September despite medical reports stating that at least 30 of the detainees had bruising and other injuries caused by a blunt instrument. The authorities do not appear to have opened any investigation to determine what happened, and have already publicly rejected allegations of torture.

More than 100 people were detained between 17 and 20 September during anti-government demonstrations. On 17 September a national rally was organized by the Unitary Workers Front (*Frente Unitario de Trabajadores*) to protest against public policies. Several other social movements and groups joined the rally including students protesting at the announcement of a rise in public transport fares. There have been reports of clashes with the police and complaints of excessive use of force.

Please write immediately in Spanish, English or your own language:

- Call on the authorities to respect the right to fair trial of the 53 detainees and guarantee they are given adequate time to prepare their defence;
- Urging the authorities to ensure the 53 detainees are not tortured or otherwise ill-treated and that they have regular access to their families and lawyers of their choosing and any medical care they may require;
- Calling on them to order a prompt, independent and effective investigation into allegations that these detainees were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in police custody, and ensure that those suspected of criminal responsibility are brought to trial.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 13 NOVEMBER 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice

Dra. Ledy Zúñiga Rocha
Ministerio de Justicia
Av. Colón entre Diego de Almagro y
Reina Victoria, Quito, Ecuador
Email: comunicacion@minjusticia.gob.ec

**Salutation: Dear Minister / Estimada
Señora Ministra**

Attorney General

Dr. Galo Alfredo Chiriboga Zambrano
Fiscalía General del Estado
Av. Patria y 12 de Octubre
Quito, Ecuador
Fax: +593 2 398 5800 ext. 163 030
Email: serranoam@fiscalia.gob.ec

**Salutation: Dear Public Prosecutor /
Señor Procurador General**

And copies to:

Local human rights organization
Comisión Ecuémica de Derechos
Humanos (CEDHU)
Carlos Ibarra 176 y 10 de Agosto
Edificio Yurac Pirca Piso 9
Quito, Ecuador
Email: cedhu@cedhu.org

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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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