

URGENT ACTION

PROTESTERS DETAINED, AT RISK OF ILL-TREATMENT

Security forces in Caracas detained 243 people involved in ongoing anti-government demonstrations between 7 and 8 May. The whereabouts of those who have not yet been released remain unknown. They are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Between 7 and 8 May security forces in the Chacao and Baruta Municipalities of Caracas, the capital, detained 243 people in four makeshift camps built as part of anti-government demonstrations that have been ongoing throughout the country since February 2014. Some of these 243 people have already been released, including some minors.

The relatives of those detained have expressed concern at the reports of excessive use of force by security forces in their operation to dismantle the four makeshift camps built by protesters. The relatives have also stated they have been unable to establish the exact whereabouts of their family members following the detention.

In the context of the ongoing protests in Venezuela, Amnesty International has received dozens of complaints about torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of detainees by members of the security forces, at the time of detention, during transfer and at detention centres. The detainees' safety and right to due process are at grave risk.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- ✓ Calling on the authorities to make public the whereabouts of all detainees, and ensure they are protected from torture and other ill-treatment, are given immediate access to their lawyers, families, and any medical attention they may require;
- ✓ Calling on them to either charge those detained with a recognisable offence or release them; to respect the right of all those charged with an offence to due process and urging the authorities to refrain from making statements that undermine the presumption of innocence;
- ✓ Acknowledging that the state has a duty to maintain public order, and reminding the authorities that they must respect human rights, must not use excessive force, and must ensure that the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly are respected.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 JUNE 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice and Interior

Gral. Miguel Rodríguez Torres
Ministerio del Poder Popular para
Relaciones Exteriores, Justicia y Paz
Av. Urdaneta, Edificio Interior y Justicia
Caracas, Venezuela
Fax: +58 212 506 1685
Email: asistenciadirecta3@gmail.com

Salutation: Señor Ministro/

Dear Minister

Attorney General of the Republic

Dra. Luisa Ortega Díaz
Edificio Sede Principal del Ministerio
Público, Esquinas de Misericordia a Pele
El Ojo Avenida México
Caracas, Venezuela
Email: ministeriopublico@mp.gob.ve

Fax: +58 212 578 3239

**Salutation: Dra. Fiscal / Dear
Prosecutor**

And copies to:

Amnistía Internacional Venezuela
Av la Salle, Torre Phelps, piso 17,
Oficina 17A
Plaza Venezuela
Los Caobos, Caracas 1050
Venezuela
Fax: +58 212 793 1318 ext. 116
Email: info@aiven.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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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since the beginning of February 2014, Venezuela has been shaken by mass protests for and against the government in various parts of the country. The unrest has already resulted in the death of over 41 people, including at least six members of the security forces. More than 650 people have been injured and over 2,000 have been detained. Most people arrested have been conditionally released pending investigations but they face charges that could lead to years in prison.

There are indications of excessive use of force by the security forces, as well as reports of violence by armed pro government groups and by anti-government protesters. Amnesty International has received dozens of complaints about torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of detainees by members of the security forces, at the time of detention, during transfer and at detention centres. The aim of the cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of detainees appears to have been to punish them for their participation, or alleged participation in the protests. Among the complaints received are cases of beatings by members of the security forces, who allegedly punched, kicked and hit detainees with blunt objects, such as helmets, including when detainees were being restrained on the ground at the time of detention.

The organization has also received complaints from detainees who were allegedly forced to kneel or stand for long periods at detention centres, subjected to sexual abuse or threatened with rape. Other reports indicate that some were threatened with death, and in one case, officer's allegedly poured petrol onto a young detainee.

Detainees were not given medical examinations on arrival at detention centres and, in some cases, did not receive medical attention until they were brought before a judge, despite evident wounds from rubber pellets or bullets. The right of detainees to be examined by a doctor and receive medical treatment whenever necessary is a safeguard against torture and ill-treatment, and an integral part of the authorities' duty to guarantee respect for the integrity and dignity of the individual.

Name: 243 people detained in Caracas

Gender m/f: both

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