



THREE YEARS ON, IMPUNITY CONTINUES IN JAMAICA:

SHELDON GARY DAVIS' MOTHER STILL AWAITS JUSTICE FOR THE KILLING OF HER SON DURING THE 2010 STATE OF EMERGENCY



Paulette Wellington, mother of Sheldon Gary Davis, with Sheldon's sister © Amnesty International

Three years have passed since Sheldon Gary Davis was killed by security forces in West Kingston during the state of emergency. Three years that his family have been suffering from his loss while receiving no answers. But his mother will not give up until she obtains justice for her son.

Sheldon Gary Davis was a construction worker and was living with his mother and sister in Denham Town, a marginalized community of West Kingston, when the state of emergency was declared on 23 May 2010. The decision was taken by the Jamaican government following an outbreak of gang violence when armed supporters of suspected gang leader Christopher "Dudus" Coke protested against his extradition to the USA on drug-related charges.

According to his mother, Paulette Wellington, about 30 law enforcement officers came to their house at 10am on 30 May 2010 and began to interrogate Sheldon Gary Davis. They accused him of being involved in gang violence, which he denied, and said that his limp – the result of a childhood illness – might have been due to a gunshot wound and was proof of his involvement in the violence against security forces which occurred during the state of emergency.

He was taken into custody in a blood bank a few blocks from their home, which served as a detention centre during the state of emergency. The security forces reported that he was killed after attempting to grab a soldier's gun. After witnessing his arrest, Sheldon Gary Davis' mother searched desperately for her son before finally receiving confirmation four days later that he had been killed. At that point, Paulette Wellington reported the killing to the Office of the Public Defender. The Director of Public Prosecutions referred the case to the Coroner's Court. The Coroner's inquest is supposed to resume investigation into the case at the next hearing scheduled on 22 July 2013.

"I buried him on 4 July, on the day of my birthday. For [a] long time after his death, my memory was gone. I cried every Sunday after church. I still avoid passing by the Blood Bank. My younger daughter was unable to take her exams at school and had to go through counselling. Sheldon was helping me a lot. Now I am alone, in dire financial straits and I don't know how to pay for my daughter's school fees. I would like to put the guilty behind bars and sue the government. If my son was alive, it wouldn't matter how old I got, he would take care of me. I pray God [...] I may be able to get justice." – Paulette Wellington, mother of Sheldon Gary Davis, March 2011

During the state of emergency at least 4,000 people were detained and dozens killed. Seventy six people were killed in Tivoli Gardens and other areas of West Kingston in the first few days after the declaration of the state of emergency. The Office of the Public Defender received at least 44 complaints of extrajudicial executions, including that of Sheldon Gary Davis. The Office was tasked with carrying out an investigation into human rights abuses committed during the state of emergency. However it was not until late April 2013 that the Office presented a preliminary report in Parliament. One of the report's main recommendations is the establishment of a commission "to conduct a judicial inquiry into the activities of the State Security Forces and illegal gunmen during the State of Emergency, 2010."

Amnesty International, along with Jamaican human rights organizations, has been calling for the establishment of such a commission of inquiry. In May 2011 Amnesty International issued the report *Jamaica: A long road to Justice? Human rights violations under the state of emergency*, which reports the various allegations of human rights violations committed by security forces during the state of emergency and documented various cases including that of Sheldon Gary Davis (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR38/002/2011>).



Blood bank in Denham Town, Kingston, where Sheldon Gary Davis was killed © Amnesty International

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ACT NOW

WRITE POLITELY TO THE JAMAICA AUTHORITIES AND URGE THEM TO:

- Ensure that a thorough and impartial investigation into the killing of Sheldon Gary Davis, as well as into all other allegations of human rights violations during the State of Emergency, is carried out and promptly finalised;
- Ensure that the individual(s) responsible for the death of Sheldon Gary Davis, and those responsible for the other alleged victims of extra-judicial killings, and other human rights violations, are brought to justice.
- Ensure that the family of Sheldon Gary Davis and the families of the other victims of the state of emergency events receive compensation and/or reparation for their losses.

EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH SHELDON GARY DAVIS' FAMILY AND SEND THEM YOUR SUPPORT:

Paulette Wellington
Blunt Street
Block 5, Building C, Apartment 29
Kingston 14
Jamaica

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

The Honourable Portia Simpson Miller **Prime Minister**

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Salutation: Your Excellency

The Honourable Mark Golding **Minister of Justice**

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Salutation: Dear Minister