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## **VENEZUELA LAWSUIT AGAINST DEFENDERS REACHES SETTLEMENT**

On 22 June 2022, Marino Alvarado and Alfredo Infante reached a settlement with Carabobo state governor, Rafael Lacava, to drop his defamation lawsuit against both human rights defenders. The organizations they represent published a report exposing possible extrajudicial executions in Carabobo and calling for exhaustive investigations, including chain of command responsibility. The settlement included an agreement for both defenders to clarify that their calls for accountability did not directly target the governor.

**NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.**

On 16 May 2022, recognised Venezuelan human rights defenders Marino Alvarado and Alfredo Infante received notification of a defamation lawsuit filed against them by the governor of Carabobo state, Rafael Lacava. The lawsuit came in response to a report published in March by the NGOs Alvarado and Infante belong to, Provea and Centro Gumilla respectively, exposing possible extrajudicial executions in Carabobo state and calling for full accountability. Amnesty International called for an immediate stop to the attack from the governor against Marino Alvarado and Alfredo Infante.

Since then, Rafael Lacava engaged Marino Alvarado and Alfredo Infante in a conciliation process overseen by the Third Court judge of First Instance in Carabobo state. The conciliation process led to a conciliation agreement or settlement, stating that between 23 June and 23 August Marino Alvarado and Alfredo Infante should clarify and publicise the fact that their calls for accountability were generic and not specific to the governor. After 23 August, the case should be permanently closed by the overseeing judge.

Amnesty International's urgent action contributed to generating public attention towards the unfair lawsuit brought against two recognised human rights defenders and putting pressure on the governor to reach a settlement instead of pursuing a trial.