

**Urgent Action Office** 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 [urgentaction@amnesty.ca](mailto:urgentaction@amnesty.ca)  
Second UA: 18/24 Index: AMR 28/8024/2024 Ecuador of May 6, 2024

## ECUADOR

### UNCONDITIONAL PROTECTION NEEDED FOR CHILD CLIMATE ACTIVISTS

Two months have passed since an explosion occurred outside the home of 14-year-old climate activist Leonela Moncayo and her family. Yet, authorities have not conducted an effective investigation into the incident. Furthermore, they have conditioned the protection of Leonela, eight other girls, and their families on the stop of their activism. We urge Ecuadorian authorities to thoroughly investigate the explosion and provide protection for Leonela and the others without imposing such conditions.

#### Write to the Attorney General of Ecuador urging her to:

- To conduct an effective, independent and impartial investigation what happened to Leonela and her family.
- Provide protection without conditions for Leonela, the eight climate activists and their families. This group of girls and their families are leaders in the fight against climate change.

#### Write to:

Ms. Diana Salazar  
General Attorney of Ecuador  
Juan León Mera N19-36 y Av. Patria,  
Edificio Fiscalía General del Estado Quito  
Quito, Ecuador  
Email: [despacho@fiscalia.gob.ec](mailto:despacho@fiscalia.gob.ec) / [mogollonf@fiscalia.gob.ec](mailto:mogollonf@fiscalia.gob.ec)  
X (Twitter): @DianaSalazarM2

#### And copy:

His Excellency Carlos Alberto Patricio Jativa Naranjo  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador  
99 Bank Street, Suite 230  
Ottawa, ON K1P 6B9  
Tel: (613) 563-8206  
Email: [eecucanada@cancilleria.gob.ec](mailto:eecucanada@cancilleria.gob.ec)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Leonela Moncayo is a 14-year-old climate activist from the Ecuadorian Amazon and the daughter of human rights defenders Donald Moncayo and Silvia Lorena Ordoñez Zambrano, associated with the strategic litigation group "Unión de Afectados por Texaco" (UDAPT). Leonela is part of a group of Amazonian girls who, alongside UDAPT, secured [a landmark ruling against the routine gas flaring practices](#) in Sucumbíos and Orellana provinces. These practices are [significant contributors](#) to the

climate crisis due to their methane emissions—a potent greenhouse gas—linked with negative health impacts on [fence line communities](#).

On July 29, 2021, the Provincial Court of Justice of Sucumbíos ruled that the Ecuadorian State had neglected the right to a healthy environment and failed in its duties to mitigate climate change and protect public health. The court mandated the gradual cessation of gas flaring, particularly near populated areas, and called for reparations for affected communities. However, compliance has been limited to public apologies and minor regulatory updates, with no significant environmental remediation or health reparations initiated.

Following an intimidation incident on February 26, believed to be linked to their activism, Leonela and other plaintiffs attended a National Assembly session on February 21, 2024, to challenge the authorities' claims of compliance with the court ruling. The Energy Minister's remarks during the session minimized the activists' concerns and suggested the girls were being manipulated. In response, the activists refuted these claims, highlighted the increase in gas flares, and expressed their frustration over the lack of substantial action.

Amnesty International reported that the local prosecution is investigating an attack on Leonela and her family, offering them protection under the condition of silencing their activism. This condition contravenes [international human rights obligations](#), which emphasize the state's duty to protect human rights defenders and enable their work without interference.

The case of Leonela Moncayo underscores the [ongoing challenges faced by environmental defenders](#) in Ecuador. It highlights the need for the state to fulfill its international obligations by providing a safe environment for human rights defenders, especially those advocating for land, territory, and environmental rights. The international community, including bodies like the Interamerican Commission of Human Rights and frameworks such as the Escazú Agreement, advocate for stronger protections to ensure that defenders can pursue their activities without facing retaliation or restrictions.

***Please take action as soon as possible until July 31, 2024! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***