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First UA: 01/25 Index: AMR 53/8909/2025 Venezuela of January 8, 2025

VENEZUELA FREE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

On January 7, 2025, Carlos Correa, a prominent human rights defender and executive director of the Venezuelan NGO Espacio Público, was arbitrarily detained by hooded individuals. His fate and whereabouts remain unknown.

Correa's detention is solely linked to his work on human rights. He joins four other activists—Javier Tarazona, Rocío San Miguel, Carlos Julio Rojas, and Kennedy Tejada—who are also arbitrarily detained in Venezuela for their activism.

We call on Nicolás Maduro to ensure their immediate and unconditional release. While they remain in state custody, authorities must guarantee their safety, protect them from torture, and uphold their right to a fair trial.

Write to the Venezuelan President urging him to:

- Ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all human rights defenders unfairly detained in Venezuela.
- Guarantee the rights to life and safety of those in custody, protecting them from harm while they remain detained.
- Uphold their rights to be free from torture and ensure they receive fair trial guarantees in accordance with international standards.

Write to:

President of the Republic Nicolas Maduro
Palacio de Miraflores,
Av. Nte. 10, Caracas 1012,
Caracas, Venezuela

Salutation: Your Excellency:

And copy:

Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
32 Range Road
Ottawa, ON K1N 8J4
Tel: (613) 235-5151/ (613) 447-4576 (24h) Fax: (613) 235-3205
Email: consular@misionvenezuela.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On January 7, 2025, Carlos Correa, director of the Venezuelan NGO Espacio Público, was intercepted by hooded individuals dressed in black in downtown Caracas. He was taken to an unknown location. This method of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance is commonly used by state security forces to silence individuals perceived as threats to Nicolás Maduro's government, including human rights defenders.

Correa's detention highlights the ongoing dangers faced by activists in Venezuela. Amnesty International has documented repeated harassment, attacks, and detentions targeting human rights defenders.

Several activists remain arbitrarily detained in Venezuela:

- [Javier Tarazona](#), director of Fundaredes, has been imprisoned since July 2, 2021, for his human rights work.
- [Rocío San Miguel](#), a prominent lawyer and defender, was detained on February 9, 2024, and kept in an unknown location until February 15. She remains imprisoned.
- Carlos Julio Rojas, a journalist and activist, was detained on April 15, 2024, allegedly by the National Bolivarian Intelligence Service. He remains in custody.
- [Kennedy Tejada](#), a lawyer with Foro Penal, was detained on August 2, 2024, while providing legal aid to other victims of arbitrary detention.

These individuals face unfounded criminal charges, grave violations of fair trial guarantees, and targeted persecution for their activism.

Following Venezuela's July 28, 2024, elections, repression reached a new peak. [Over 2,000 people](#) were detained for political reasons, with vulnerable groups, [including children and persons with disabilities](#), among those targeted. Civil society organizations have faced increasing harassment, prosecution, and censorship amidst Venezuela's deepening humanitarian and human rights crisis, which has forced [over 7.8 million people](#) to flee the country.

The [August 2024 "anti-NGO law"](#) imposes strict regulations on civil society organizations, requiring lists of members, donors, and financial records. Non-compliance can lead to closure and criminal prosecution.

Internationally, reports from the [UN fact-finding mission](#) have documented crimes against humanity in Venezuela since 2014, including torture, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial executions. In 2024, the mission concluded there were reasonable grounds to believe political persecution had occurred. The [International Criminal Court](#) is also investigating [crimes against humanity](#) committed since at least 2017 by state security forces, civil authorities, and pro-government groups.

Please take action as soon as possible until July 8, 2025! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.