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Seventh UA: 01/25 Index: AMR 53/0203/2025 Venezuela of August 13, 2025

VENEZUELA

ONE DEFENDER FREED, FIVE OTHERS STILL IN DETENTION

On August 12, 2025, at around 9:00 p.m., human rights defender Martha Lía Grajales was conditionally released in Caracas, Venezuela. She had been arbitrarily detained since August 8. The charges against her remain.

Five other human rights defenders are still unjustly detained: Javier Tarazona, Rocío San Miguel, Kennedy Tejeda, Eduardo Torres, and journalist Carlos Julio Rojas, who has been held incommunicado since July 30.

We urge Nicolás Maduro to immediately and unconditionally release all arbitrarily detained people. Their rights to life, safety, and a fair trial must be respected, including access to trusted medical care and family visits.

Write to the President of Venezuela urging the government to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Eduardo Torres, Javier Tarazona, Rocío San Miguel, Carlos Julio Rojas, Kennedy Tejeda, and all other people arbitrarily detained in Venezuela.
- Disclose the fate and whereabouts of all forcibly disappeared persons without delay.
- Ensure that all detainees receive adequate medical care while in custody.
- Guarantee that detainees are allowed regular family visits.
- Protect the fair trial rights of all detainees.

Write to:

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

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 August 8, 2025, human rights defender Martha Lía Grajales was taken in Caracas by people believed to be police officers. For three days, her fate and whereabouts were unknown. On August 11, the Attorney General's Office admitted on social media that she was detained and had appeared

before a judge. She was accused of “incitement of hatred,” “conspiracy with a foreign government,” and “criminal association.” These charges are often used to silence dissent, and no credible evidence has been presented against her. Martha was later granted conditional release but continues to face criminal prosecution.

The Venezuelan government has a long record of repressing dissent. After the July 28, 2024 election, repression reached a new level, with [more than 2,000 people arbitrarily detained for political reasons](#). Many were charged with terrorism or incitement of hatred, including [children and people with disabilities](#).

According to Foro Penal, as of August 5, 2025, at least 807 people remain arbitrarily detained, including 95 women, four teenagers, and 44 people whose fate and whereabouts are still unknown.

Amnesty International’s report [Detentions Without a Trace](#) documented how enforced disappearances have become widespread in Venezuela. Between August 2024 and June 2025, at least 15 cases were confirmed. As of August 11, eight people remain disappeared. Others have been located but remain unjustly detained.

This pattern of persecution is part of a wider human rights crisis and humanitarian emergency. By May 2025, [more than 7.9 million Venezuelans had fled the country](#) in search of safety and protection.

Human rights defenders and civil society groups are being harassed, censored, and prosecuted. The so-called [“anti-NGO law,”](#) adopted in August 2024 and enforced in February 2025, forces organizations to disclose staff lists, donors, and financial records. Non-compliance can result in closure or criminal charges.

International bodies have sounded the alarm. The [UN Fact-Finding Mission](#) has documented hundreds of cases of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and extrajudicial execution since 2014. It concluded that some of these violations amount to crimes against humanity, including persecution on political grounds.

The [International Criminal Court](#) has been investigating since November 2021. The probe covers crimes against humanity such as unlawful detention, torture, sexual violence, and politically motivated persecution by state forces, officials, and pro-government groups.

Please take action as soon as possible until January 31, 2026. The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.