

URGENT ACTION

FREE VENEZUELAN PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

At least four human rights defenders are currently arbitrarily detained for defending rights in Venezuela: **Javier Tarazona**, detained in 2021; **Rocío San Miguel**, **Carlos Julio Rojas**, and **Kennedy Tejada**, all three detained in 2024. They are prisoners of conscience and must be released immediately and unconditionally. We demand Nicolás Maduro ensures they are released as a matter of urgency and, while in state custody, protects their life and safety, right to not be subjected to torture, and fair trial guarantees.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **Third UA 1.25**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

President of the Republic Nicolas Maduro

Palacio de Miraflores,
Av. Nte. 10, Caracas 1012,
Caracas, Venezuela

CC: Permanent Mission of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations

His Excellency Mr. Samuel R. Moncada Acosta
335 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017

Mr. Nicolás Maduro,

We call for the immediate and unconditional release of **Javier Tarazona**, **Rocío San Miguel**, **Carlos Julio Rojas**, and **Kennedy Tejada**. They are all prisoners of conscience detained solely for defending, educating, and promoting human rights.

Javier Tarazona is an educator and director of NGO FundaRedes. He was detained on July 2, 2021 when trying to report harassment from authorities to the public prosecutor's office. Rocío San Miguel is a lawyer and president of the civil society organization Control Ciudadano. She was detained on February 9, 2024, and sustained a shoulder fracture while in custody that requires urgent surgery and rehabilitation. Carlos Julio Rojas is a journalist and community organizer, detained since April 15, 2024 for raising concern over problems affecting his community. Kennedy Tejada is a young lawyer and volunteer for Foro Penal. He was detained on August 2, 2024 when inquiring over the whereabouts of two men who had allegedly been arrested.

All four prisoners of conscience have suffered a myriad of other grave human rights violations, including enforced disappearance in the days following their detention, denial of trusted legal defense, periods of incommunicado detention, denial of medical care, and some have even reported being subjected to torture.

I call for the immediate and unconditional release of Javier Tarazona, Rocío San Miguel, Carlos Julio Rojas, and Kennedy Tejada, and every victim of arbitrary detention in Venezuela. Pending their release, I demand that they are guaranteed the right to life and medical care, to not be subjected to torture, and for all fair trial guarantees to be fully protected.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Nicolás Maduro's government's long-standing policy of repression to silence any form of real or perceived dissent reached a historic peak after the July 28, 2024 election, which saw over [2,000 people arbitrarily detained](#) for political reasons, including vulnerable groups such as [children and people living with disabilities](#). According to the local organization Foro Penal, as of February 17, 2025, at least 1,061 people remain arbitrarily detained for political reasons, including 121 women, four teenagers, and 58 whose fate and whereabouts are reportedly unknown.

Within this policy of repression, the government has continually harassed, prosecuted, and censored activists and civil society organizations working to protect the rights of Venezuelans amidst a complex humanitarian emergency and a deep human rights crisis making Venezuelans flee in unprecedented numbers in search of safety and protection. By November 2024, over [7.8 million](#) had fled Venezuela.

As Amnesty International has repeatedly denounced, human rights defenders in Venezuela are at a constant risk of harassment, attacks, and detention. Nicolás Maduro's government is currently pursuing several initiatives to control and silence human rights and civil society organizations. The [bill adopted](#) in August 2024 titled 'Law for the audit, regularization, action and financing of non-governmental and related organizations', or so-called 'anti-NGO law', imposes strict controls that include handing over lists of members and personnel and their assets, lists of donors, and registration of financial movements. Non-compliance with registration requirements could lead to the closure of civil society organizations and possible criminal prosecutions. The bill's provisions began entering into force starting in February 2025.

Since 2020, reports from the UN independent international [fact-finding mission](#) on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (FFM) have thoroughly documented hundreds of cases of extrajudicial executions; enforced disappearances; arbitrary detentions; and torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment committed in the country since 2014; as well as the ways in which the justice system serves as a tool for the government's policy of repression, concluding that some of these international crimes and human rights violations amount to crimes against humanity.

Since November 2021, the Office of the [Prosecutor](#) of the [International Criminal Court](#) is conducting a criminal investigation into the situation in Venezuela, specifically regarding the "[c]rimes against humanity of deprivation of liberty or other serious deprivation of physical liberty (...); torture (...); rape and/or other forms of sexual violence of comparable severity (...); and politically motivated persecution against persons detained (...), which were committed since at least April 2017, by members of the State security forces, civil authorities and pro-government persons (or groups called "collectives").

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: August 26, 2025

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Venezuelan prisoners of conscience (they/them)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/urgent-action-free-venezuelan-human-rights-defenders-venezuela-1-25/>