

# URGENT ACTION

## FEW RELEASES, HUNDREDS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS REMAIN DETAINED IN VENEZUELA

On May 18, 2026, 16-year-old Samantha Hernández was conditionally released. Her sister, Aranza Hernández, who was 19 years old at the time of her arrest on November 20, 2025, remains arbitrarily detained. Approximately 500-600 people continue to be arbitrarily detained for political reasons, including Emirlendris Benítez and Juan Carlos Marrufo, who are in urgent need of medical assistance. The fate and whereabouts of some presumed detainees remain unknown, like Jorgen Guanares. We call on the Venezuelan Attorney General to ensure the immediate release of all those arbitrarily detained and, while in custody, to disclose their fate and whereabouts and guarantee adequate medical care.

### 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 **Seventh UA 72.24**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Larry Devoe

Attorney General

Edificio Ministerio Público, PB, Av. Urdaneta, esquinas  
de Ánimas a Platanal  
Caracas, Venezuela

*Send a copy of your letter to the address below*

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. Attorney General,

I am writing to condemn the Venezuelan authorities' continued refusal to release **all those arbitrarily detained** in Venezuela.

It is deeply unsettling that high-ranking government authorities tacitly acknowledge that hundreds are being held unlawfully, yet fail to take decisive action, despite having the power to do so.

Arbitrary detention is a serious human rights violation and is often compounded by other prohibited acts. This is the case, for instance, of **Jorgen Guanares**, whose fate and whereabouts have been unknown since August 2024, and of **Emirlendris Benítez** and **Juan Carlos Marrufo**, who are currently denied adequate medical care despite urgent needs.

Families, communities, and civil society organizations are being forced to deal with the uncertainty of not knowing what could happen to those detained, including the potential for death in custody, like in the shocking and widely condemned case of **Victor Hugo Quero Navas**.

I call on you to ensure the immediate release of all those arbitrarily detained. While in state custody, every detainee must have their life protected, their fate and whereabouts known, as well as all fair trial guarantees, including the right to counsel of choice, adequate medical care, and family visits.

Yours sincerely,

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Venezuelan government's long-standing policy of repression to silence any form of real or perceived dissent has continuously used politically motivated arbitrary detentions to persecute people in Venezuela. Throughout many years, authorities have implemented a so-called 'revolving door' of detentions, whereby releases are usually followed by new detentions. This practice reached a historic peak after the July 28, 2024, election, which saw over [2,000 people arbitrarily detained](#) for political reasons, many of them charged with seemingly unfounded counts of terrorism and incitement of hatred, including vulnerable groups such as [children and people living with disabilities](#).

Between December 2025 and May 2026, Venezuelan authorities have slowly and sporadically released a few hundred victims of politically motivated arbitrary detention, most on conditional release and maintaining the criminal investigations or charges against them. On January 3, [USA's military action](#) in Venezuela led to the capture of Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores, and the swearing in of Delcy Rodríguez as acting president of Venezuela. A few days later, National Assembly president, Jorge Rodríguez, announced that a "significant number" of people detained will be released. Again in May, he announced the release of "three hundred" detainees. As of May 25, at least 457 people remained arbitrarily detained for political reasons, according to Venezuelan NGO Foro Penal, with other local NGOs -like Justicia, Encuentro y Perdón- raising that figure to over 600.

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 that is making Venezuelans flee in unprecedented numbers in search of safety and protection. By May 2025, [7.9 million](#) had fled Venezuela.

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.

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 30, 2026

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Persons detained for political reasons (they, them, their)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/venezuela-hundreds-still-arbitrarily-detained/>