

URGENT ACTION

ARBITRARY DETAINEE HELD INCOMMUNICADO

On 2 April 2020, officers of the Venezuelan Directorate for Military Counterintelligence (DGCIM) raided the home of Maury Carrero in Caracas (Capital) and detained her arbitrarily for reportedly being linked to an advisor to Juan Guaidó, President of the National Assembly. She has had almost no contact with her attorneys and family and has been held incommunicado since 1 May. Maury Carrero is at risk of torture and forced disappearance, which are common in the country. We demand Maury's release as her judicial case is processed, with all due process guarantees, protection for her integrity, and immediate access to her family and lawyers.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Nicolás Maduro
President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
Palacio de Miraflores
Av. Nte. 10, Caracas 1012, Distrito Capital,
Venezuela
Tel: +58 212-8063111
Twitter: @NicolasMaduro

Dear Nicolás Maduro,

I am concerned about the continuing use of arbitrary detentions, torture, disappearances, and other human rights violations in Venezuela, particularly as your government uses the COVID-19 pandemic to further abuse its power.

On 2 April 2020, Maury Carrero was arbitrarily detained by DGCIM officials. Currently, she remains in custody and is being denied her right to communicate with her attorneys safely and privately. Maury Carrero's lawyers have repeatedly been denied access to and communication with her. Her family is unsure of her whereabouts. Incommunicado detention for prolonged periods of time can amount to torture under human rights law.

I demand Maury Carrero be released while any investigation is carried out with all due process guarantees. Until then, I demand that the DGCIM guarantee Maury Carrero's personal integrity, as well as give immediate and adequate access to her lawyers and family.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As the world grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, Nicolás Maduro's government has used this crisis to further expand and abuse its power. The government has significantly escalated its use of arbitrary detentions of opposition members, real or perceived, as well as other critics. Furthermore, there is evidence of torture, disappearances, and extrajudicial executions committed by the Maduro government.

On 2 April 2020, approximately 15 DGCIM officials raided the home of Maury Carrero. In the process, they took many of the family's valuables and electronics. The officials advised Maury Carrero's parents that they were taking her temporarily and would bring her back home, as the search warrant did not include her name on it. Maury Carrero did not return home that night. Since then, she has only been permitted an extremely short phone call approximately once a week, during which officials are present the entire time and she is unable to speak freely nor safely about the conditions of her detention. She has been formally charged with terrorism, association to commit crime, concealment of firearms and explosives, and concealment of a minor quantity of drugs. She was able to speak to her lawyers only during the judicial hearing. DGCIM officials have denied her access to her family and lawyers under the excuse of the state of alarm that has been in place as response to the COVID-19 pandemic since 13 March 2020.

Maury Carrero's arrest is another example of the Maduro government's policy of repression. Intimidation, harassment, torture, arbitrarily detentions and enforced disappearances are common practices of the DGCIM and the Maduro government. In recent years, dozens of opposition politicians have been forced to flee the country and request asylum in the face of threats they have received from the Maduro government; others have been arbitrarily arrested for being related to an opposition leader or activist. Ordinary Venezuelans who dare criticize their government or join protests also face the threat of detention, and some have suffered forced disappearances or have been killed by security forces. In the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, medical personnel, journalists and others have faced detention after calling attention to new COVID-19 cases or to the scarcity of medical supplies and basic goods.

In last year's report, *Hunger for Justice: Crimes against Humanity in Venezuela*, Amnesty International concluded that the selective extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and deaths and injuries caused by the excessive use of force by Nicolás Maduro's government as part of a systematic and widespread policy of repression since at least 2017 may constitute crimes against humanity.

Since 2014 Venezuelans have fled in unprecedented numbers in search of safety and a dignified future abroad. By March 2020, over 5 million had fled the country. Due the COVID-19 crisis, many Venezuelans who previously left have been forced back to the country due to collapsing economies and a lack of dedicated support for refugees impacted by the pandemic and its secondary effects. They are also at risk of government retribution.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 24 JUNE 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Maury Carrero (She, her, her)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: n/a