

URGENT ACTION

LEOPOLDO LÓPEZ MOVED TO 'HOUSE ARREST'

Venezuelan prisoner of conscience Leopoldo López was transferred from prison to his house in Caracas, the capital, on 8 July, where he will continue to serve his sentence.

In the early hours of 8 July, Venezuelan authorities transferred **Leopoldo López** out of Ramo Verde military prison in Los Teques, on the outskirts of Caracas, to his house, where he will continue to serve his sentence. While Leopoldo López is no longer being held in illegal and unjustified solitary confinement, he remains a prisoner of conscience, serving an arbitrary sentence under "house arrest".

Leopoldo López, leader of the opposition party Popular Will (Voluntad Popular), handed himself in to the National Guard on 18 February 2014 after organizing a mass anti-government demonstration. He was charged with terrorism, murder and grievous bodily harm, public incitement, arson, damages to property and conspiracy to commit crimes. In August 2014, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions qualified Leopoldo López's detention as arbitrary and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights demanded his immediate release. On 10 September 2015, he was sentenced to 13 years and nine months in prison for conspiracy, arson, incitement to commit a crime, and damage to public property. On 13 August 2016, the Appeals Court upheld this ruling. Beginning on 8 April 2017, prison authorities kept Leopoldo López in illegal and unjustified solitary confinement for 35 days, during and after which the same authorities denied him access to his lawyers, thus violating his right to defence.

Leopoldo López remains a prisoner of conscience who must be fully, immediately, and unconditionally released from house arrest, as his detention is arbitrary, the charges filed against him were never adequately substantiated and his sentence was clearly politically motivated.

No further action is required of the UA Network at this time. We will continue calling for Leopoldo López's unconditional release as part of our longer term campaign and will call for further support from the UA Network as and when needed. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the ninth update of UA 33/14. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr53/6282/2017/en/

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