

URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS ACTIVIST SLANDERED AND STIGMATISED

Military official accuses Venezuelan Indigenous environmental rights defender Lisa Henrito of “treason” - on national television - due to her activism in the defence of the Pemón Indigenous People's traditional territory.

On 23 July, Pemón Indigenous environmental defender **Lisa Henrito** was accused of “treason” and “secession” by an armed forces official on national television in Venezuela. The official made the accusations during an interview where he also called on the Venezuelan military forces to beware of the Pemón Indigenous People's activism in the defence of their rights. Amnesty International has documented other cases in which, after a person has been mentioned by senior officials they have been persecuted by the authorities. Such was the case for Villca Fernández, Geraldine Chacón and Gregory Hinds. All three are considered prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International.

Lisa Henrito is being stigmatized for her work as an activist in Pemón Indigenous women's organizations that demand the end of the militarization and mining exploitation of their ancestral territories, without prior informed consultation or studies of social impact.

The state must guarantee the protection of the physical integrity of Lisa Henrito, and other environmental and indigenous activists, and put an end to the slander and stigmatization of their actions in defence of the rights of their communities; as enshrined in the Venezuelan Constitution and international human rights mechanisms that protect Indigenous Peoples and their land, territory and environment.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language to the Venezuela authorities to:

- Ensure the safety of Lisa Henrito;
- Ensure all human rights defenders in Venezuela can operate freely without fear of restrictions or reprisals;
- Request that the authorities publicly acknowledge the importance and legitimacy of the work of all people who defend human rights in Venezuela, and refrain from using language that discredits, stigmatizes, insults, despises or discriminates against them.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 OCTOBER 2018 TO:

Minister of the Interior and Justice

Néstor Reverol (Major General)

Fax: +58 (0212) 5061111

Twitter: @MIJPVenezuela

Salutation: Ministro / Minister

Minister of Indigenous Peoples

Aloha Núñez

Email: minpidespacho@gmail.com

minpi.atencionindigena@gmail.com

Fax: +58 (0212) 5416355

Twitter: @MINPIOFICIAL

Salutation: Ministra / Minister

And copies to:

Alfredo Ruiz

Ombudsperson

Email: contacto@defensoria.gob.ve

dinternacionales@defensoria.gob.ve

Fax: +58 (0212) 5077025

Twitter: @Defensoria_Vzla

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HER EXCELLENCY ROCÍO MANEIRO, Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 1 Cromwell Road SW7 2HW, 020 7584 4206 or 020 7581 2776, Fax 020 7589 8887, despacho.londres@mppre.gob.ve embavenezuk@venezlon.co.uk info@venezlon.co.uk, <http://reinounido.embajada.gob.ve/>

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The traditional territory of the Pemón Indigenous People, located in the Venezuelan Amazon, on the border with Guyana and Brazil, faces a process of militarization that comes from the large-scale project of the Orinoco Mining Arc (Arco Minero del Orinoco, AMO in its Spanish acronym). This is an extractive project that covers 12% of the national territory and the Guyanese shield, one of the oldest geological formation in the world. In the AMO, there are 15 transnational mining companies in operation, although the development plan for the area includes the operation of 150 extractive companies.

Name: Lisa Henrito

Gender m/f: female

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