



CENTRO PARA
LOS DEFENSORES
Y LA JUSTICIA

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN VENEZUELA

JULY 2025

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The Center for Defenders and Justice (CDJ) documented **18 attacks and security incidents** in Venezuela during July 2025.

Human rights organizations and human rights defenders continue to be exposed to serious risks in a context of closing civic space.

State violence hinders the work of civil society by inhibiting and neutralizing activities through intimidation.

ATTACKS JULY 2025



18 ATTACKS

The 18 attacks and security incidents documented during the month of July reflect the systematic patterns of aggression that shape the policy of criminalization, repression, and control.

Stigmatization campaigns continue unabated and are accompanied by acts of intimidation and harassment.

The 18 incidents recorded during the month of July were characterized by:

ATTACK CHARACTERIZATION:



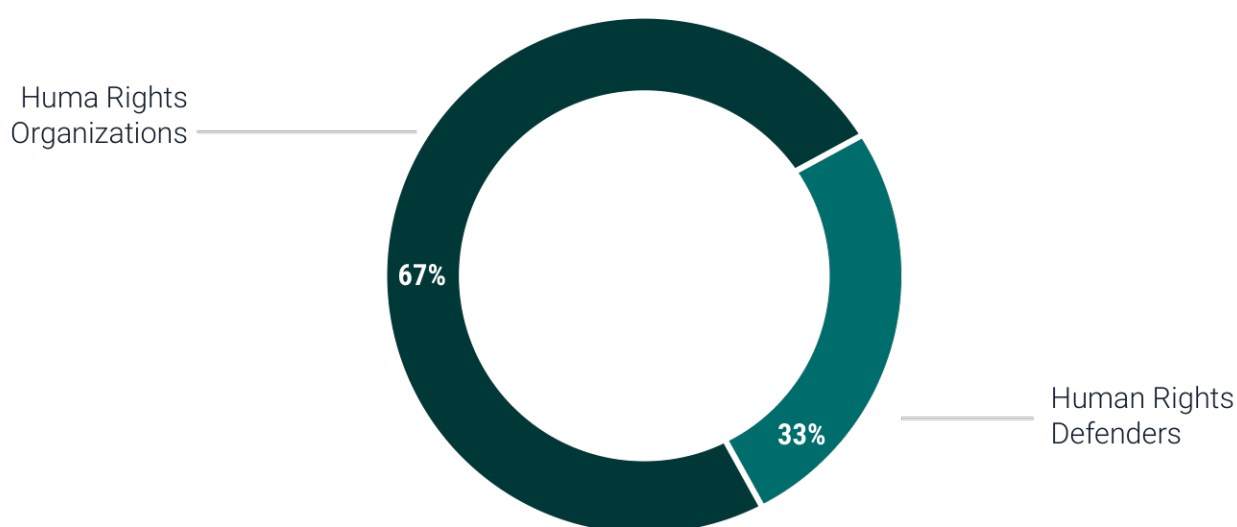
In July, communication platforms were constantly used to intimidate and stigmatize individuals and organizations, with the aim of distorting their activities under the guise of an internal enemy and attempting to link their activities to destabilization or partisan political events.

Likewise, acts of intimidation, harassment, and threats continue as part of the State's repressive response.

Finally, judicial harassment against human rights defenders persists. Arbitrary criminal proceedings, deprivation of liberty, and lack of due process guarantees continue.

VICTIMS OF THE ATTACKS

Of the total attacks documented during July 2025, 12 were directed against human rights organizations, equivalent to 67% of the total. Six were identified against human rights defenders, representing the remaining 12%.



Among some of the cases, we highlight the systematic stigmatization campaigns and intimidation against the organization Foro Penal, as well as widespread accusations and harassment against the work of human rights organizations in the country.

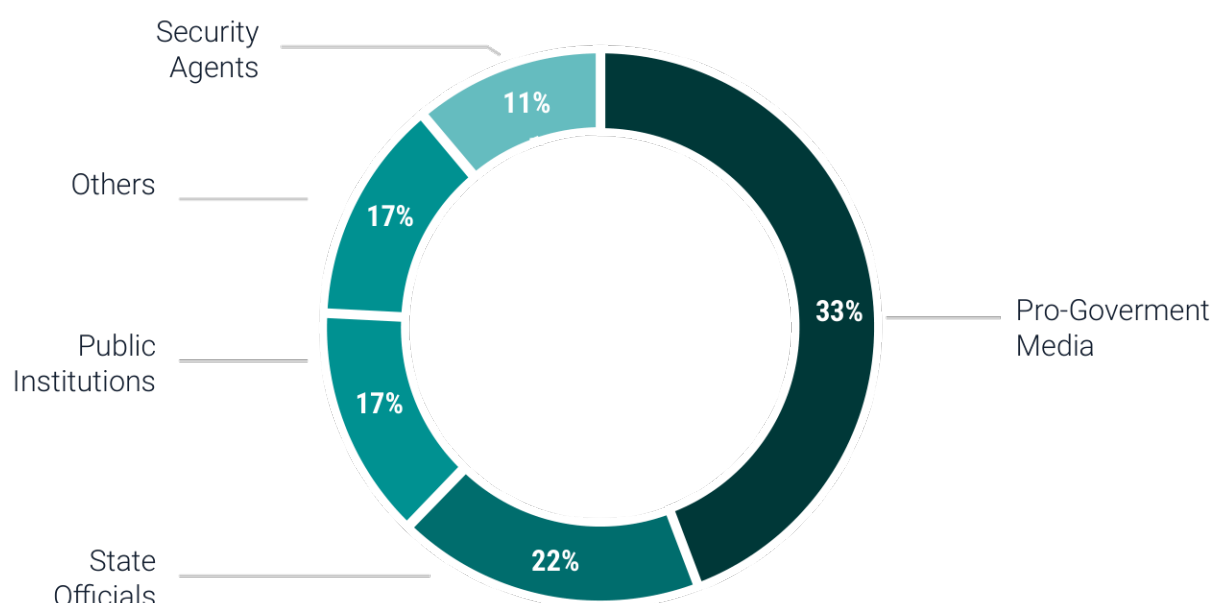
Likewise, the ongoing trial of Javier Tarazona, Rafael Tarazona, and Omar de Dios García, members of the FundaRedes organization, is worrisome. The judicial harassment against them must cease, and Javier Tarazona must be released.

PERPETRATORS

The main perpetrators of the documented security attacks and incidents during the month of July were as follows:

A total of six attacks (33%) were carried out through traditional and digital state media outlets and their social media accounts; four of the attacks were perpetrated by public officials, who used their social media profiles or made statements in government media outlets to stigmatize, intimidate, and threaten (22%); three of the attacks were the responsibility of public institutions (17%); three of the attacks were carried out by security agencies (17%); and two of the attacks were perpetrated by other actors aligned with the government or associated with state entities (11%).

PERPETRATORS



01

CRIMINALIZATION OF THE DEFENSE, DEMANDING AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The 18 incidents documented during July 2025 continue to generate concern as they originate in a context of institutional violence and repression.

The right to defend, demand, and promote human rights is directly affected as those who carry out these activities are under constant fear of retaliation for their work.

The closure of Civic and Democratic Space has made the environment for civil society, and particularly human rights organizations, increasingly adverse and hostile.

The stigmatization campaigns continue unabated. The accusations and smear campaigns that seek to link the work of human rights organizations with “destabilization” or partisan political activities, as well as to discredit complaints, persist¹.

Given the ongoing socio-political crisis and a complex humanitarian emergency, the work of defending, demanding, and promoting human rights has become even more necessary. Therefore, it is essential to establish measures that allow for this to happen without retaliation or arbitrary restrictions.

¹ See for example: https://x.com/UnleashDracarys/status/1940401872096956822?t=C-bZ_00w5mz8qXUS5Fw4tw&s=08 ; <https://mazo4f.com/cabello-sobre-las-ong-esas-no-saben-nada-quedaron-peor-que-bukele> ; <https://mazo4f.com/diosdado-cabello-en-venezuela-seguimos-de-pie-y-no-nos-rendimos>

02

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CRIMINALIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENSE IN VENEZUELA

In the face of the advances made by the Policy of Criminalization of the Defense and Demand for Human Rights in Venezuela, international organizations and international human rights protection bodies continue to speak out against the attacks committed and demand that the State fulfill its duty to promote and protect the work of human rights defenders.

Among the calls made by international organizations registered during the month are:

On July 2, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), together with its Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (RELE), spoke out on the anniversary of the 2024 election in Venezuela. The international organization denounced the arbitrary arrests of journalists and human rights defenders, warning that people continue to be detained for exercising their profession when “*denouncing repression and demanding democratic guarantees*”. Finally, they insisted that freedom of expression should not be criminalized².

As for international organizations, the following stand out:

On July 2, the organization Amnesty International spoke out on the fourth anniversary of Javier Tarazona’s arrest, demanding his immediate release and reiterating that, according to the organization, Javier is classified as a prisoner of conscience and should not be “*suffering abuses from the Venezuelan authorities*”³

On July 25, international organizations Amnesty International, the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), the Due Process of Law Foundation (DPLF), the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), and the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Center (RFKHR) participated in a public hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to “*expose the intensification of the policy of repression and systematic and sustained persecution against human rights defenders in Venezuela*”. They denounced “*patterns that evidence a deliberate strategy of punishment and deterrence against those who exercise the right to defend human rights. These mechanisms include arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, passport revocation, criminalization, digital surveillance, threats, and stigmatization campaigns*.”⁴

²See @CIDH: https://x.com/RELE_CIDH/status/1949842030974190008

³See: @AmnistiaOnline: <https://x.com/AmnistiaOnline/status/1940455442578100464>

⁴See: Center for International Law and Justice (CEJIL): <https://cejil.org/press-release/venezuela-repression-does-not-stop-and-puts-people-in-risk-at-defend-human-rights/>

03

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Those who safeguard human dignity face attacks and intimidation, without effective mechanisms to guarantee the performance of their work.

State violence, repression, and social control continue to have negative impacts on the enjoyment of human rights in Venezuela and restrict civic and democratic space.

The State must stop criminalizing civil society and ensure a safe and enabling environment for individuals and organizations defending human rights. Defending human rights is not a crime.

We urge the international community to continue monitoring the closure of civic and democratic spaces in the country and to continue promoting the construction of enabling and safe environments that guarantee the safety of human rights defenders.

CENTRO PARA LOS DEFENSORES Y LA JUSTICIA

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