



PROMINENT LAWYERS AND LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS CALL FOR PROTECTIVE MEASURES AND SAFE PASSAGE FOR BOLIVIAN CITIZEN JUAN RAMON QUINTANA

The National Lawyers Guild (NLG), The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) and the American Association of Jurists (AAJ) strongly condemn the politically motivated persecution by the de facto regime in Bolivia against members of former president Evo Morales's government, in particular, former Minister of the Presidency and Ambassador Juan Ramón Quintana, and the abuse of the law enforcement system to arbitrarily arrest and persecute him and other individuals on the sole basis of their past political positions. NLG, IADL and AAJ call on those currently exercising power to cease the ongoing violations of Mr. Quintana's fundamental human rights to due process, life and liberty, freedom of expression, freedom of transit, freedom from discrimination and freedom of asylum as guaranteed under the Bolivian Constitution, the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) and all international law and resolutions to which Bolivia is party. We urge the Bolivian regime to immediately cease all threats to Mr. Quintana's physical integrity and to allow him full enjoyment of his right to asylum and safe passage to Mexico, where he has been granted political asylum, as guaranteed under international law.

NLG, IADL and AAJ firmly denounce the public, explicit and unquestionable political persecution of Juan Ramón Quintana, a Bolivian citizen and former Minister of the Presidency and Ambassador to Cuba during the Evo Morales government. Immediately after the forced resignation of Evo Morales from his duly elected office as President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on November 10, 2019 during the right-wing and military-led coup d'état, the self-appointed interim regime began an aggressive public campaign to persecute and capture Juan Ramón Quintana. Right-wing ex Senator from the Cochabamba region of Bolivia, Arturo Murillo, who was appointed to the post of Minister of Interior of the de facto regime led by Jeanine Añez, has made repeated hate-infused public declarations on both national and international media, that demonstrate the unequivocally aggressive political persecution of Mr. Quintana and a clear threat to his physical integrity. A New York Times [article](#) from November 16, 2019, cites

Mr. Murillo's admission, *"We're going to go hunting for Juan Ramón Quintana...because he is an animal..."* Murillo has made similar statements to the press on multiple occasions since the rupture in constitutional order on November 10, 2019 and the forced ouster of Evo Morales's government. He stated to local Bolivian media on November 14 that he would *"immediately meet with the police and give necessary instructions to go hunting for Juan Ramón Quintana. Why hunting? Because he's an animal..."* The use of terms such as 'hunting' and 'animal' describe not only clearly politically motivated persecution, but also the dehumanization of the victim in order to justify the crude violation of their rights.

Human Rights Watch has also denounced the grave abuses committed by the de facto right-wing regime in Bolivia and in particular, the aggressive persecution and dehumanizing language used against Juan Ramón Quintana. *"On November 13, the newly appointed minister of government, Arturo Murillo, warned that the government will "go after" and **incarcerate people** who commit "sedition" – a crime that is vaguely defined and carries up to three years in prison under Bolivian law...Murillo said that the government would also "hunt down" Juan Ramón Quintana, minister of government under former President Evo Morales, whom he described as "an animal." Any investigations and prosecutions against former officials from Morales' MAS political party should strictly respect due process guarantees, Human Rights Watch said."*

On November 25, 2019, a request for Protective Measures on behalf of Ex-Minister Quintana was filed with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). On the same day, the de facto Minister of Interior Arturo Murillo announced a warrant had been issued for Mr. Quintana's arrest for the alleged crimes of terrorism, sedition, amongst other grave offenses. No evidence has been presented to support such serious allegations and the arrest warrant comes after over two weeks of repeated admissions of 'hunting' Mr. Quintana because he was a high-level member of Evo Morales's administration.

Just days earlier, Murillo had announced an arrest warrant for Evo Morales had been issued for similar allegations of terrorism and sedition. Mr. Morales is currently in Mexico, where he was granted political asylum after his life was threatened following the November 10, 2019 coup d'état. Juan Ramón Quintana has also been granted political asylum in Mexico and is presently receiving diplomatic asylum in the Mexican Embassy in La Paz, Bolivia. However, the de facto regime of Jeanine Añez has refused to grant his safe passage to Mexico, in clear violation of international norms governing rights of asylees. A representative from the Bolivian Public Ministry, or National Prosecutor's Office, stated on live television on November 26 that the arrest warrant for Juan Ramón Quintana was issued to 'impede his asylum', an unambiguous admission of the

abuse of law enforcement and legal process in order to arbitrarily detain a politically persecuted individual. This continuum of escalating acts of persecution complicates international humanitarian efforts to provide Ex-Minister Quintana and other ex-ministers with safe passage from the Mexican Embassy in La Paz, Bolivia to Mexico where his family awaits.

After a three-day investigation in Bolivia, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has concluded that a “massive grouping of violations of human rights” occurred in Bolivia following the right-wing coup d’etat and lethal repression executed by regime-controlled police and armed forces against anti-coup demonstrators, resulting in the deaths of at least 33 civilians and hundreds of injured. IACHR has recommended an international panel of experts investigate the human rights violations in Bolivia that occurred after the coup against Evo Morales and emphasized that the “national institutions aren’t prepared to resolve such a massive grouping of violations of human rights” in the country.

The National Lawyers Guild (NLG), The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) and the American Association of Jurists (AAJ) also call on the IACHR to issue protective measures for Juan Ramón Quintana, to guarantee his physical integrity, his rights to due process, life and liberty, and his right to safe passage to Mexico where he has been granted political asylum. As concluded by the IACHR, Bolivia is presently incapable of guaranteeing fair and credible judicial due process to victims of human rights abuses and persecution by the de facto regime. Therefore it is clear that the regime-issued arrest warrant for Juan Ramon Quintana is an example of gross political persecution and an unequivocal violation of his human rights. Mexico’s granting of his political and diplomatic asylum must be respected and his safe passage must be ensured in compliance with international law.