



ACADEMIA DE CIENCIAS  
FÍSICAS, MATEMÁTICAS  
Y NATURALES



Academia Nacional  
de la Ingeniería y el Hábitat

## **THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF VENEZUELA ON PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AND TORTURE**

The National Academies of Venezuela, by their very character and nature, must concern themselves with matters relating to the well-being of the scientific and academic community in particular and the society in general, including the defence of human and civil rights. It is therefore our duty to express concern regarding information received from the Criminal Forum (Foro Penal), a Venezuelan non-governmental organization recognized by the international community as an authority in criminal matters, on the detention of members of the universities without due procedure, as stipulated in the Constitution and laws of the Republic. Previously, on the 10/10/2017, we raised the case of 8 university professors detained under these conditions. Today, we refer to the university and health science professionals, José Alberto Marulanda Bedoya and Williams Alberto Aguado Sequera, held in the Ramo Verde military prison, and brought before military courts despite their civilian status, who would have been victims of torture, as would a number of students and other citizens detained under similar conditions.

In the very recent "*Report of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Panel of independent International Experts on the possible commission of crimes against humanity in Venezuela*", in statements by defence lawyers and organizations of great prestige in the promotion and defence of human rights in our country, the use of extreme torture in citizens detained without due process are repeatedly reported, inconsistent with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, that specializes in the surveillance and criminalization of genocides and heinous crimes, and of which the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is a signatory. Torture is considered a crime in constitutional and international laws, it destroys the personality of the victims, degrades their dignity, leaves physical and psychological sequelae and is an oppressive method of intimidation and control that is expressly prohibited in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Accordingly, the National Academies of Venezuela call on the national authorities to review the allegations that these victims may have submitted and, if they are confirmed, to stop the use of any method of torture, to provide immediate medical attention to those

affected and free the prisoners of conscience, thus complying with the national laws and international agreements in the matter.

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