

Sr. Rodolfo Antonio Delgado Montes
Fiscal General de la República (FGR)
San Salvador, El Salvador

August 12, 2025

Dear Attorney General:

We are increasingly distressed by the arrest and detention of five environmental and human rights defenders from El Bosque Cooperative of the El Triunfo canton of Santa Tecla, La Libertad Department. On Monday, May 12, 2025, residents of the El Bosque neighborhood engaged in a protest in the neighborhood of President Nayib Bukele. Two of these arrested protesters were **Alejandro Henríquez**, a lawyer and environmental defender, and **José Ángel Pérez**, an evangelical pastor, day laborer, and president of the El Bosque Cooperative.

The protest concerned an eviction order that would displace 300 families from El Bosque Cooperative, forcing them off land they have lived on for years and that is rich with fertility and water resources. The families that live there rely on these resources for agriculture and have cultivated a strong community with a school to raise their children.


Both Alejandro Henríquez and José Ángel Pérez of El Bosque Cooperative were charged with public disorder and resistance and remanded by a judge to six months pretrial detention (*prisión preventiva*). Henríquez is being detained in La Esperanza Prison—without outside communication and at risk from prison overcrowding, mistreatment, and possibly torture.

These recent detentions are reflective of an alarming threat to peasants nationwide and a crackdown by the Bukele Administration on advocates for human rights and the protection of environmental resources. Two years ago in 2023, five anti-mining activists were arbitrarily detained on accusation of committing a murder in 1989. These are just a few of the more than 86,000 detentions of “alleged gang members” that have occurred since President Bukele declared a state of exception in March of 2022. Many of these detainees have no tangible ties to gang activity.

We call on the government of El Salvador to:

- immediately release from pretrial detention Alejandro Henríquez and José Ángel Pérez
- drop all false criminal charges against Alejandro Henríquez and José Ángel Pérez
- if the charges stand, hold free, fair trials for the five community leaders arrested from El Bosque Cooperative.
- stop misusing the penal system to persecute those peacefully exercising their rights.

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Sziittai
Co-Coordinator


Christine Stonebraker-Martínez

copies: Sr. Presidente Nayib Bukele, Presidente de la República ~ via email and US mail
Licda. Raquel Cabellero de Guevara., Procuradora para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos/ Human Rights Ombudsman of El Salvador ~ via email
Carmen Milena Mayorga de Monterrosa, Ambassador of El Salvador in Washington, DC ~ via email & US mail
Carlos Bernal Pulido, Rapporteur for El Salvador, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email & US mail
William H Duncan, Ambassador of the US in San Salvador ~ via email & US mail
US State Department: El Salvador Desk ~ via email
US Senators Husted and Moreno and US Representatives Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Rulli, Sykes ~ via email

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The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: