



PRESS RELEASE

Cristosal files habeas corpus petition over the arbitrary detention of Ruth López

San Salvador, June 2, 2025 — On Thursday, May 29 at 12:14 p.m., Cristosal attorneys and the family of lawyer and researcher Ruth López filed a habeas corpus petition before the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice, denouncing her arbitrary detention.

The petition notes that Ruth was detained on May 18, 2025, without a judicial warrant and through use of deceit by agents of the National Civil Police. At the time of her arrest, the officers read a supposed administrative order consisting of a brief paragraph of four to five lines. This document was not given to her lawyers or her family and does not meet the minimum constitutional requirements for a valid detention.

Cristosal's petition also warns the Court that the Attorney General's Office failed to submit formal charges within the 72-hour timeframe established by the Constitution. Furthermore, it denounces that Ruth has not had free and private communication with her legal team, violating her right to an effective defense.

It also notes that, under the American Convention on Human Rights, there are rights and guarantees that cannot be suspended, even under a state of exception. These include the right to personal liberty, the right to be fully informed of the charges against oneself, the right to freely communicate with legal counsel, and the right to adequate time and means to prepare a defense.

All these rights have been violated in her case.

For these reasons, Cristosal is requesting that the Constitutional Chamber order the immediate release of Ruth López, who remains deprived of her liberty more than 15 days after her arrest, without any formal charges having been brought against her. As of this date, the Court has not issued a response to the petition.

Her case is not an exception, but a reflection of the serious human rights crisis currently facing El Salvador. Like her, thousands of people have been incarcerated without the minimum guarantees of due process: no judicial order, no access to adequate legal defense, and no formal charges. Moreover, this case shows how the state of exception has opened the door to arbitrary detentions and an alarming abuse and undermining of the institutions responsible for protecting fundamental freedoms.