



Family and Cristosal Demand Verification of Ruth López's Health Condition

Guatemala City, May 19, 2026. Ruth López, Salvadoran human rights lawyer, was arrested at her home on May 18, 2025, and has been held in prison in El Salvador for a year without trial. López has been recognized internationally for her work as the head of Cristosal's anti-corruption unit in defense of democracy and legal advocacy in the fight against corruption in El Salvador.

Over the weekend, relatives of Ruth López, learned that she had been transferred from prison where she is being held in pretrial detention, to a hospital in El Salvador's capital and had undergone a medical procedure. The family was not notified in advance of her transfer, the reasons for the procedure, or her current condition.

Ruth was arrested without a judicial warrant. She has been held with limited access to her family and legal defense, and the criminal proceedings against her remain sealed from the public.

On Monday, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published a statement by a group of experts that concluded that “the circumstances of the detention and the irregularities in the proceedings suggest that López is being targeted in retaliation for her legitimate activities as a human rights defender and lawyer.”

On September 22, 2025, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) granted precautionary measures in her favor after determining that “she is in a serious and urgent situation, as her rights to life, personal integrity, and health face a risk of irreparable harm in El Salvador.” As a result, the Commission ordered the Salvadoran Government to adopt the measures necessary to effectively protect her fundamental rights, among other directives.

The Salvadoran Government has failed to fulfill its obligation to adequately guarantee Ruth López's right to health. It has also failed in its duty to provide her family with truthful, timely, and clear information regarding her diagnosis, treatment, risks, and prognosis. This comes despite repeated requests from her legal representatives seeking detailed information about her health condition and receiving no adequate response.

We recognize the importance of ensuring prompt medical care. However, we demand that her family be immediately informed of her condition and that both her relatives and legal representatives be granted urgent access to her medical records and to Ruth in person, so they can verify that the State is providing the medical care she requires.

We call for the immediate release of Ruth López to guarantee her right to health, allow her to be accompanied by her family, and government compliance with the IACHR's recommendation urging the Salvadoran Government to review the legality and proportionality of her pretrial detention.