

Amnesty International
1 Easton Street
London
WC1X 0DW, UK

Topic: Freedom of speech seriously threatened by a minister of Curacao.

Willemstad, November 7, 2011

Dear sir or madam,

On Monday 31 of October representatives of the group "I am also one of the 40" in Curacao protested at Wilhelminaplein, against threats to eliminate the basic right of freedom of speech by a minister of the government of Curacao, minister Carlos Monk. The minister threatened the 40 people, who spoke with the commission Paul Rosenmöller calling them 'traitors' and proposing punishment to be introduced in the constitution of Curacao to penalize these whistleblowers. The minister expressed these threats during his speech in Parliament of Curacao on the 11 of October. The commission Paul Rosenmöller has been instituted by Dutch Kingdom decree with the approval of the Prime minister of Curacao, in order to examine the integrity of public officials and the functioning of institutions in Curaçao. The government of Curaçao has affirmed her approval and cooperation for the investigation. Therefore the threat of Minister Carlos Monk by calling those who spoke to the commission traitors and threatening with punishment is a direct attack on freedom of speech which is also part of the constitution of Curacao.

On 31 of October more than 1000 men and woman protested to give expression to the horror over the objectionable attitude that the minister took in threatening to silence whistleblowers. With the action "I am also one of the 40" the more than 1000 protesters came together at Wilhelminaplein to show solidarity and support with "the 40" who spoke to the commission and give a clear signal to the government that the people of Curacao will not accept that citizens are threatened when they have an opinion that the government does not support. During the demonstration that got the name of "The Cry of Alameda", (Gritu di Alamenda) the protesters demanded apologies from the minister within 48 hours. Since the minister despite the large group of protesters (Curacao has a population of 140,000) did not act on the demand of the protesters, neither the Prime Minister nor the minister of Justice have distanced themselves or disapproved the threat, which draws the conclusion that the Prime Minister and his ministers are agreeing to these anti-democratic thoughts endangering the fundamental right of freedom of speech thus the democratic foundation of Curaçao. For this reason, I send this letter to Amnesty International, as spokesman and initiator of the protest. The purpose of this letter is to denounce this threat on freedom of speech by a minister of the Curacao, Carlos Monk, to the international community.

We will be silent no more.

On behalf of "The 40", the more than 1000 protesters for the protection freedom of speech in Curacao

Stephen Walroud