

State of Exception

80,000 arrested. 265 deaths.

El Salvador now has the highest incarceration rate in the world!

Isla El Espíritu Santo

Puerto El Triunfo, Usulután Department

On their small island of Isla El Espíritu Santo, residents live relatively isolated from the mainland and rely on income from coconut crops. That's why it's been dubbed "Coconut Island." Their peaceful existence was shaken, however, when President Nayib Bukele announced his State of Exception in March 2022. His government began to target the islanders through arbitrary arrests.

State of Exception

As a response to combat the country's powerful street gangs, President Bukele's "temporary measure" (now in its 3rd year!) has **suspended constitutional rights, such as the presumption of innocence and the right to a fair trial.** The effects of these punitive policies have had a ripple effect throughout Salvadoran society, disproportionately felt by women whose sons and husbands are imprisoned. Drawing from 3,643 reports from victims and their families, the nonprofit Cristosal has found **deplorable detention conditions, lack of medical care, and cases of torture. With mass detention and the deaths** of at least 265 people in custody (including four infants), "the justice system has failed and is complicit in the systematic violation of the human rights of the Salvadoran people."



Release the Innocents! CAMPAIGN GOALS

Release the Innocents

Free the islanders who were arbitrarily arrested on an island devoid of gang structures or crime.

Allow Families to See Their Loved Ones in Prison

Once imprisoned, families are not allowed to see their loved ones.

Restore Due Process and Presumption of Innocence

Reinstate fundamental rights suspended during the State of Exception.

Urge US government to speak out!

Congress can instruct the US State Department to push for release of the innocents and restoration of basic



FREE THE INNOCENTS FROM ISLA EPIRITU SANTO

Stop arbitrary arrests. End mass incarceration.
Restore basic constitutional rights in El Salvador!

Between May 13, 2022 and April 28, 2023, 25 residents of Isla Espiritu Santo were arrested without a proper warrant and accused of criminal activities, even though the island has not historically experienced gang violence. Here are profiles of four of the victims of President Bukele's crackdown on crime:

Cristian Donely Ruiz Pineda

age 44

- shoemaker, fisher, builder
- married with two daughters and a grandson
- arbitrarily arrested in his home around 8:30 p.m. on July 3, 2022.
- Cristian hasn't seen his family for 2 years. But every month, his wife Carolina, goes to Mariona prison to leave a \$75 packet of food, clothing, medicine and hygiene—basic products the gov't does not provide.

José Samuel Pérez Perdomo

age 60

- a dedicated boat driver for CIS high school and university scholarship students since 2011
- arbitrarily arrested on May 13, 2022; has been moved the prison medical center in Izalco, suffering from mental and physical illnesses

Fabricio Isaac Fuentes López

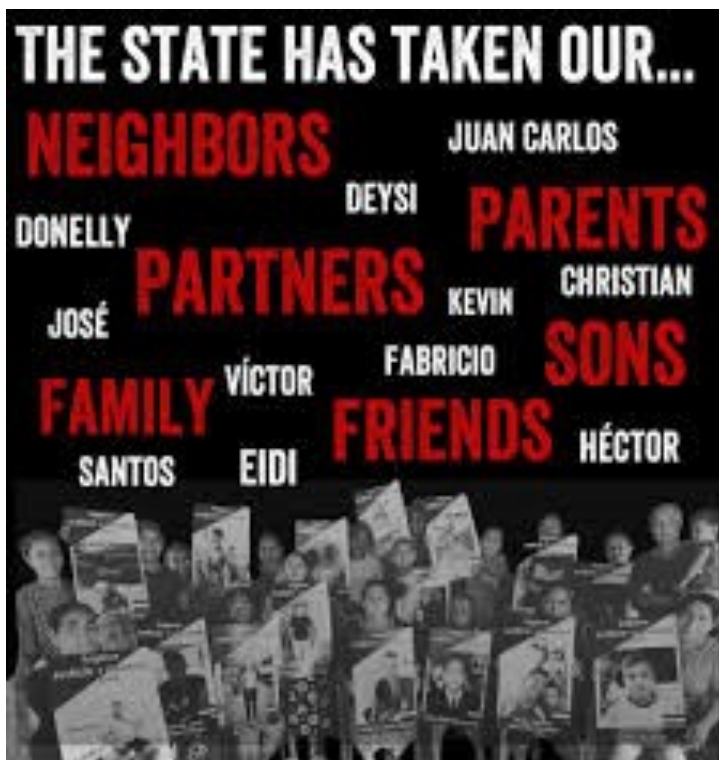
age 24

- arbitrarily arrested on July 18, 2022, despite Fabricio's protests and clean record.

Eidi Roxana Claros de Zaldaña

age 44

- Sandra Leticia Hernández, owner of a successful taxi business, and her partner Eidi Roxana Claros de Zaldaña had suffered attacks from a rival taxi company for sharing a home as a lesbian couple
- the rival taxi group accused Sandra of collaborating with gangs
- on April 28, 2023, their home was surrounded by 25 soldiers and police
- Eidi intervened on Sandra's behalf, and Eidi was arrested
- Sandra was later released, but Eidi remains in prison.



to

TAKE ACTION

Use this toolkit bit.ly/IESToolKit to

Tell the stories of the innocents

Quote the families of the wrongfully imprisoned

Amplify the goals and demands of our campaign

Tag these officials to gain visibility

@andresgzm Andrés Guzmán, Human Rights Commissioner of El Salvador

@FiscalGeneralSV Rodolfo Delgado, Attorney General of El Salvador

@CancillerAleHT Alexandra Hill, Foreign Minister of El Salvador

@nayibbukele President Nayib Bukele

@AsambleaSV Legislative Assembly of El Salvador

#LibertadParaIES

@nayibbukele has allowed the arrest of thousands of innocent people under the **#StateofException**

How were 25 innocent people arrested without:

- gang ties
- physical evidence
- due process
- ????????????????????

The #StateofException is tearing families apart.

Learn more:

- bit.ly/HRWChildReport
- bit.ly/CristosalReport
- bit.ly/CISReport1

@irtfcleveland