

### **Facts about Juan Pablo's case**

The arbitrary detention of Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Pablo Guanipa

<https://freejuanpabloguanipa.substack.com/p/facts-about-juan-pablos-case>

Juan Pablo Guanipa, former deputy and Vice President of the National Assembly, is the current coordinator of the Primero Justicia party in Zulia state and a key ally of opposition leaders María Corina Machado and Edmundo González. Since 2017—when the Maduro regime barred Juan Pablo from taking office as the elected Governor of Zulia—he has been the victim of prolonged and systematic persecution by the Venezuelan state.

Today, Juan Pablo Guanipa is the highest-ranking political prisoner being held in Venezuela.

On May 23, 2025, in the context of the legislative and regional elections, Juan Pablo was arbitrarily detained by uniformed police officers—equipped with automatic weapons and bulletproof vests—allegedly belonging to the Bolivarian National Police.

Despite a video declaration he made before his arrest, which named his legal counsel in the event of his arrest, Guanipa was denied counsel and assigned a public defender who is not in contact with his family. On July 4, 2025, a petition for habeas corpus was denied by the Venezuelan judiciary, citing the terrorism accusation but providing no evidence to support it and without notice to his family that any hearing on the matter had even taken place.

### ***History of persecution against Juan Pablo Guanipa.***

The most recent arrest of Juan Pablo Guanipa is the culmination of a long chain of acts of persecution against him that began at least in 2016.

**2016:** He was stripped of his salary as a deputy as a measure of political retaliation.

**2017:** He was prevented from exercising his parliamentary duties and after winning the governorship of Zulia state, he was forced to be sworn in before the National Constituent Assembly; when he refused, he was stripped of his position.

**2018:** He was arbitrarily detained for hours and the victim of physical violence by police officers.

**2019:** The Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice did not recognize his parliamentary immunity without due trial of merit, forcing him into hiding.

**2024:** He was politically disqualified for 15 years by the National Electoral Council, and after the presidential elections, he was repeatedly persecuted by state security agencies after participating in public activities with María Corina Machado.

This prolonged and escalating persecution led the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to grant precautionary measures in favor of Juan Pablo Guanipa in October 2024. The IACHR considered that their rights to life and personal integrity faced a risk of irreparable harm in Venezuela.

The documented facts of his forced disappearance, none of which have been disputed by the Venezuelan government, demonstrate clear violations of the International Convention for the

Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, of which Venezuela is a signatory, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of which Venezuela is a state party.

***These materials are distributed by DCI Group AZ, L.L.C. on behalf of Juan Pablo Guanipa through Ramon Guanipa. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC***