



**Alert of Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean
Network for Democracy (Redlad):
Persecution against PROVEA and Civil Society Organizations in
Venezuela.**

April, 2013.

***Unofficial translation done only for the purpose of being understood.**

The Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (Redlad) warns of the Venezuela government's attacks against various Civil Society Organizations human rights defenders in the country.

The organization Venezuelan Program of Education-Action in Human Rights (Programa Venezolano de Educación-Acción en Derechos Humanos-PROVEA) has been subject to serious attacks by the Venezuelan government in recent days. Especially after a statement released by PROVEA last Thursday April 18, in which he questioned the veracity of government claims about the massive destruction of Integral Diagnostic Centers (CDI) in the Mission Barrio Adentro by opponents during demonstrations demanding the recount of the election day on Sunday April 14.

In the statement, PROVEA did not deny the destruction of the centers but said it found no reliable evidence to indicate that dozens of structures had been burned, nor that they were acts committed by members of the opposition, as the government officials said.

The Ombudsman, Gabriela Ramirez and Communication Minister, Ernesto Villegas, attacked to PROVEA through official media with derogatory epithets and saying that the organization serves to fascist interests. Regional media as Diario La Verdad, toured the structures and found that they were in perfect condition. The newspaper El Universal, also visited some of the centers in Caracas, that authorities said that they were assaulted and found that the undamaged buildings



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are fully operational, in excellent conditions and serving people. The fury of the government against PROVEA and other Civil Society Organizations in Venezuela seems to rise, a clear symptom of restricting freedoms of association and expression.

Given the facts, the Permanent Secretariat of Redlad, a platform for advancing democracy and respect for human rights, comprising more than 480 organizations, Official Member of the Civil Society Forum of the Organization of American States (OAS) and Regional Chapter of the World Movement for Democracy (WMD):

- Rejects Venezuelan government attacks and the Ombudsman against Venezuelan organizations of recognized work, recalling the obligation of the State to protect human rights defenders and to respect the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and assembly.
- It calls for social organizations Venezuelan to demand an end to the government's campaign of harassment and persecution against the citizens and the restoration of fundamental freedoms.
- Urges the Venezuela media and the world media, to report and denounce persecution and harassment undertaken by the Venezuelan government to discredit and stop the operation of organizations defending human rights . The NGOs actions are certainly necessary in any democracy and guarantees the constant monitoring of the respect of human rights.
- It calls the world's democratic governments and civil society organizations of the continent to demand the Venezuelan government respect for fundamental freedoms assumed in the major human rights conventions to which it ought enforcement, compliance and primacy.

**Permanent Secretariat
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San José, Costa Rica**

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