

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

# Treasury Designates Venezuelan Officials Involved in Unjust Trial of the “Citgo 6”

December 30, 2020

Washington – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated Venezuelan judge Lorena Carolina Cornielles Ruiz and Venezuelan prosecutor Ramon Antonio Torres Espinoza, the Venezuelan government officials who presided over and prosecuted the November 2020 trial and sentencing of six U.S. persons in Venezuela. The six U.S. persons, known as the “Citgo 6,” are Citgo executives who were unjustly imprisoned in Venezuela in November 2017 after being lured to Caracas under false pretenses. The trials of each of the executives were based on politically motivated charges and marred by a lack of fair trial guarantees. Media and human rights groups denounced the treatment of the executives and were denied access to the trials.

“The unjust detention and sentencing of these six U.S. persons further demonstrates how corruption and abuse of power are deeply embedded in Venezuela’s institutions,” said Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin. “The United States remains committed to protecting its citizens and targeting those who contribute to the illegitimate Maduro regime’s usurpation of power in Venezuela.”

These individuals were designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13692, as amended.

### **LORENA CAROLINA CORNIELLES RUIZ**

**Lorena Carolina Cornielles Ruiz** (Cornielles) is a judge in the Executive Directorate of the Maduro-aligned Venezuelan Supreme Court who presided over the trial of the Citgo 6. Cornielles ultimately sentenced each of the six U.S. persons on charges of corruption with prison sentences between eight and thirteen years.

### **RAMON ANTONIO TORRES ESPINOZA**

**Ramon Antonio Torres Espinoza** (Torres) is a corruption prosecutor at the Public Ministry of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Torres was the primary prosecutor representing the

Maduro regime during the Citgo 6 trial.

Today, Cornielles and Torres were designated pursuant to E.O. 13692 for being current or former officials of the Government of Venezuela.

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the persons designated that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by the designated persons are also blocked. OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all dealings by U.S. persons or those within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of blocked or designated persons.

U.S. sanctions need not be permanent; sanctions are intended to bring about a positive change of behavior. The United States has made clear that the removal of sanctions may be available for individuals and entities, including those designated pursuant to E.O. 13692, who take concrete and meaningful actions to stop providing support to the illegitimate Maduro regime, including to those Government of Venezuela agencies that support Maduro.

[View identifying information on the persons designated today.](#)

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