CHILE
REPRESSION AGAINST DEMONSTRATORS

Since 18 October, thousands took to the streets in Chile in response to a metro fare hike in its capital city, Santiago. The demonstrations broadened subsequently, to reflect people’s anger over living costs and inequality. The president decreed a state of emergency, enabling the army to police demonstrations and to impose a curfew.

Amnesty International is concerned by reports of military presence on the streets to police massive demonstrations which began after an increase in public transportation fees, but that underline other structural factors of inequality that are causing major social discontent and unrest. Since the establishment of the state of emergency on 18 October, there are reports of at least 15 deaths, more than 1,400 arrests including minors, ill treatment that could constitute torture of detainees, and violent repression against peaceful demonstrators.

Please send a tweet or letter to the president.

* Urge him to implement measures to address the legitimate demands of those currently exercising their rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.
* Call on him to end the deployment of the army to police the demonstrations.
* Ask him to guarantee that the police strictly comply with the international standards on the use of force.
Write to

Sebastián Piñera  
Presidente de la República de Chile  
Palacio de la Moneda, Calle Moneda s/n  
Santiago, Región Metropolitana  
Chile  
Twitter: @SebastianPinera  
Salutation: Dear Mr. President

Please copy

His Excellency Alejandro Arnaldo Marisio Cugat  
Ambassador for the Republic of Chile  
50 O’Connor Street, Suite 1413  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L2  
Fax: 613 235 1176  
Phone: 613 235 4402  
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Additional information

Within days of the announcement of an increase in public transport fares in Santiago de Chile, thousands of people mobilized to demand a freeze on the fee increase. Their demands also include solutions to a variety of policies that have placed a burden on vast sectors of society and have impacted on their economic, social and cultural rights.

After several violent episodes in the streets, the government suspended the public transportation service and, on 18 October, decreed a State of Emergency. The decree called on the National Defence Command to police demonstrations and impose a curfew in the metropolitan area of Santiago and other cities starting on 19 October. The curfew remains in effect.

The Vice Minister of Interior reported that 15 people have died in violent incidents during the protests throughout the country. On 21 October, the local organization National Human Rights Institute (Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos, INDH) reports more than 1,400 detentions including 181 minors, and over 80 people injured by firearms. They have also recorded countless reports of torture and ill-treatment among other human rights violations.

On 20 October, President Sebastián Piñera called on political parties to agree on a new law that would halt the increase in public transportation fares. The law was approved on 22 October. Demonstrators and social movements are calling for significant measures to address the underlying factors of inequality. Protests continue.