

# *Human rights groups warn of dictatorship-like practices in Chile*

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Santiago de Chile, October 24 (RHC)-- In Chile, thousands have been arrested, including 243 minors and 407 women, 9 of whom were stripped during police procedures, according to the National Institute of Human Rights (NHRI).

“First it was blows, humiliations and threats. Over the last hours, however, women's torture and rape became a reality in Chile. President Sebastian Piñera administration's state of exception brought dictatorship practices back, including disappearances,” journalist Adriana Meyer said Thursday morning as reported by Argentinean newspaper Pagina 12.

“Many of the women who have been arrested are missing. In addition, those imprisoned in Santiago were stripped in front of the male staff, groped in their genitals and put the tip of the rifle in their vagina while [security forces] threatened to rape and kill them.??”

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IAHCR) expressed concern about complaints related to sexual violence, forced undressing and torture. “Chile must investigate and punish these facts diligently, as well as the police and military actions in which disproportionate use of force against civilians

would have been made. The use of force must be governed by the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality," the IACHR warned.

"Chile's hidden repression: violations and disappearances. Official figures, complaints in alternative media and an Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) warning." The meme reads, "After the Sunday protests there were 1,420 people arrested, including 181 minors and 300 women. Nine of them were stripped by the police."

The Chilean Network Against Violence Towards Women spokesperson Silvana del Valle told local alternative outlet El Desconcierto that sexual abuse has been a constant feature of police practices.

"Political-sexual violence has been ongoing in our country and across the region over the past decades, for police institutions have been educated to be patriarchal devices," Del Valle said and denounced that both during and after the Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990) police forces have been trained under such mentality.

Meanwhile, 206 law professors and deans demanded that the Chilean authorities put an end to the State of Emergency and the curfew.

"As law professors, although we have different political positions, we cannot keep silent about our country's current situation... We have heard of very serious events which show common patterns," the lawyers said in a public letter entitled "On the Chile's serious political and social crisis and the human rights violations that have occurred."

The academics invited all lawyers in the country to honor their profession and assume the free and timely representation of all persons whose rights are violated. "We pledge that no act related to any human rights violation goes unpunished."

"Chile has become what Nicaragua once was during the Somoza dictatorship. Being young is a sin. The police come to your house to get you out and, from that very moment on, your future is uncertain. Chile is in crisis. Chile violates human rights."

Chilean families are remembering the worst moments of the repression carried out by the military dictatorship which ruled their country for 17 years. The anguish have returned to their everyday life.

"Like in the dictatorship, there are desperate mothers looking for their children through the Justice courts," Patricia, a psychologist, said and denounced that people are being transported in trucks to unknown places. "There are videos where you can see how bodies are thrown. We all believe that these are victims who are being thrown to burning sites to erase any trace."

Until 11:00 hours (local time), according to the Medical College data, 11 people were burned in San Bernardo, Renca, La Pintana and Quinta Normal. It has also been reported that 3 three adults and one minor were "crucified" at a police station, according to INDH data.

So far, President Piñera has deployed 19,461 police, military and detectives to halt popular protests.

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