

60. On December 17, 2003, the Commission granted precautionary measures on behalf of the patients of the Hospital Neurosiquiátrico (Neuro-psychiatric Hospital). The information available describes the sanitary and security conditions there as inhuman and degrading, and as posing a threat to the physical, mental, and moral integrity of the patients. The information received calls attention to the instances in which female patients hospitalized there have been raped, resulting in pregnancy. It is also indicated that boys and girls were held together with adults. In this context, it is noted that youths Jorge Bernal and Julio César Rotela, 18 and 17 years old respectively, were kept for more than four years in solitary confinement in small cells, naked, and without access to the bathrooms. In view of the risk to the beneficiaries, the Commission asked the Paraguayan State to adopt measures to protect the life and physical, mental, and moral integrity of Jorge Bernal, Julio César Rotela, and the 458 patients at the Hospital Neurosiquiátrico of Paraguay, including making a medical diagnosis of their health conditions, with special emphasis on the situation of women and children. It also asked that the use of solitary confinement be restricted and, when used, respect the conditions established in the relevant international standards. In response, the Paraguayan State reported that on December 31, 2003, the President of the Republic, Nicanor Duarte Frutos, and the Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare, Julio César Velásquez, visited the hospital to learn more about the situation. After their visit, action was taken, as the director was replaced and an audit was launched.