

Horacio José García

Director of the National Migrations Office

Av. Antártida Argentina 1355, Ciudad de Buenos Aires, C1104ACA

Email: hgarcia@migraciones.gov.ar

Twitter/Facebook/Instagram: @HoracioGarciaOK

Dear Horacio García,

On 1 February police officers showed up at Vanessa Gómez Cueva's house and requested that she accompany them to their offices to "sign a notification". Vanessa took her 2-year-old son with her and left her other two children at home, one 5 years old and the other 14. Police officers transferred Vanessa and her baby to a cell without light or water. Later that day, they were both moved to Ezeiza Airport in Buenos Aires, where they were held by migration authorities. On 4 February, she was deported from the country with her infant son, who is still breastfeeding, without having been able to say goodbye to her other two children, who are being cared for by relatives. All three of her children are Argentinian citizens.

Vanessa is 33 years old and arrived in Argentina from Peru more than 15 years ago. In 2013, she was sentenced to four years in prison for the sale of narcotics in an expedited trial. After serving her sentence, she sought to reintegrate herself into Argentine society and obtained a nursing qualification, while balancing her work and studies. After the conviction, in 2015, the National Migrations Office ordered her deportation without taking into proper consideration her current situation or the existence of her Argentine children.

Three months after the deportation order was issued, Vanessa filed an administrative appeal that was rejected. However, she said she was never notified of the decision to deny her appeal, preventing her from filing an appeal to that decision. In October 2018, the National Migrations Office requested a judicial order to detain Vanessa to execute the deportation order. Due to administrative errors, Vanessa never received a notification of this order and could not therefore challenge it. She was held with her baby on 1 February 2019 and both were expelled from the country three days later. Since then she has not seen her two other children. Her deportation violates the right to family life, family unity and the best interest of the child, which are all protected by national law and international treaties, including regional standards, ratified by Argentina.

I urge you to immediately reverse Vanessa's deportation, allow her re-entry into Argentina, guarantee her return with her baby and allow family reunification with her two other children.

Yours Sincerely,