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CUBA | Baptist Pastor's Wife Arrested

Yoaxis Marcheco Suarez, wife of Cuban Baptist pastor and religious freedom activist Rev. Mario Felix Leonart Barroso, was arrested in the town of Remedios in the province of Villa Clara on Oct. 16.

During her arrest, Yoaxis Marcheco Suarez was pressured to sign an Official Warning, "Acta de Advertencia", a document that can be used as justification for future arrests and criminal charges but did not. She was also told to stop having contact with "counter-revolutionary" elements or risk imprisonment. Another pastor, Yordanis Santi Perez, was arrested and interrogated at the same time.

Rev. Mario Felix Leonart Barroso similarly resisted pressure to sign an "Acta de Advertencia" in an interview with the security services Oct. 8.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "We reiterate our call for the Cuban government to cease its harassment of Rev. Leonart Barroso, his wife Yoaxis Marcheco Suarez and their family. The Cuban government must be held to account for its ongoing violations of the religious freedom of its citizens and its harassment of those who are involved in documenting these violations. We urge members of the international community to make representations to the Cuban government in support of Rev. Leonart Barroso and his family, as well as other church leaders who are being targeted by the authorities."