

ENGLISH EDITION

Family Lawyers Demand Removal of Regional Prosecutor for Dismissing Julia Chuñil's Environmental Advocacy Role

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Family lawyers accuse the prosecution of violating the principle of objectivity in the criminal proceedings and failing to uphold CIDH precautionary measures by denying the victim's role as an environmental defender.



The family's attorneys accuse the prosecutor of compromising objectivity and failing to uphold precautionary measures by denying the victim's environmental activism.

On Wednesday, October 15, a new layer of controversy emerged in the complex investigation surrounding the disappearance of Julia Chuñil Catricura. A group of intervening lawyers formally requested National Prosecutor Ángel Valencia Vásquez to remove the Regional Prosecutor of Los Ríos, Tatiana Esquivel López, from the case due to her recent statements, which, according to the petitioners, «blur» the victim's role as an environmental defender and jeopardize the impartiality of the investigation.

The document is signed by attorneys Carmen Caifil Caifil, Karina Riquelme Viveros, and Mariela Santana Machuca, arising after Esquivel's interview in the

newspaper *La Segunda*, where she claimed there were «no records to affirm that she engaged in political or organized activist work,» referring to Chuñil. She added that «rather, she was a woman dedicated to her family and agricultural activities, leading a life typical of the rural sector.» The lawyers consider this statement a «false assertion» that contradicts the investigation dossier and undermines the principle of objectivity by disregarding Chuñil's role in protecting native forests and defending the ancestral territories of the Mapuche people.

The professionals reiterated their removal requests made back in August, emphasizing that Esquivel's stance serves as «irrefutable evidence» that the investigation is not being approached with seriousness, even violating the precautionary measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights — CIDH — which had previously highlighted her leadership in defending the territory of the Mapuche Community Putreguel. Earlier this year, the activation of the Human Rights Defenders protection protocol for the case was announced.

This new development intersects with the criticism generated by a recent report from T13, which revealed a line of investigation by the PDI focused on Chuñil's inner circle, labeling her children as «subjects of interest» and disclosing an anonymous testimony suggesting that their clothing was burned. This report, which contrasts with the initial political thesis and centers on a potential family conflict, has already raised concerns about judicial leaks. In this context, Minister Camila Vallejo called for prudence and requested «maximum urgency» from the Public Prosecutor's Office.

In addition to compromising impartiality through «prejudgment» and introducing «ideological biases,» the lawyers also assert there has been a dismissive treatment of the family despite their victim status. They point to a «clear disparity in treatment,» indicating that Prosecutor Esquivel investigated the land usurpation case against the victim with greater diligence.

The attorneys demand Esquivel's replacement and the transfer of the case to a prosecutor's office in another region, arguing that her statements imply a «political bias,» protecting the image of businessman Juan Carlos Morstadt — who, in a recorded call, acknowledged that Chuñil was «burned» — and affecting the credibility of the process. They warn that Esquivel's continued involvement is a «true provocation» to concerned parties and urge the National Prosecutor to consider possible disciplinary measures against her for violating the standards and obligations of the Organic Law of the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Original article: [Defensas de familiares de Julia Chuñil solicitan remoción de Fiscal Regional por negar el rol de Chuñil como defensora ambiental](#)

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