



3.3. Deserters and draft evaders from military service

For background information, including legislation related to desertion, see EUAA COI Report – Venezuela Country Focus November 2023, Section 4.5. Infobae reported that the main reasons for desertion included the economic situation, the politicisation of the security forces, and the refusal of discharge applications.[693](#) The Military Disciplinary Law (Ley de Disciplina Militar) classifies desertion as a 'serious offense'.[694](#) On 22 May 2025, the Armed Forces sent 80 military officers to the Disciplinary Council for failing to report to duty.[695](#)

Cases of treatment of deserters and draft evaders, as reported by sources, during the reference period, included:

In February 2024, Ronald Ojeda, a former military officer living in Santiago Chile, was killed by a local branch of Tren de Aragua. Ojeda had been arrested and sentenced in 2017 in Venezuela for treason and rebellion after joining other military officers in issuing a communiqué stating that they would no longer obey President Maduro. The Office of the Attorney General of Chile indicated that it had evidence that the murder was ordered and paid for by the Venezuelan government.[696](#)

The detention of the partner of an exiled former lieutenant in January 2025 to pressure her husband to surrender. At the time of her detention, she was two months pregnant, gave birth in prison, and later received house arrest.[697](#)

On 17 February 2025, Cabello stated that among the deportees who had arrived the previous week, there were two deserters from the military, and that authorities would respect their human rights, while also noting that 'there would be consequences "for those who had outstanding matters with the justice"'.[698](#) Additional information on the two deserters could not be found among the sources consulted within the time constraints of this report.

Military personnel imprisoned were excluded from the Amnesty Law.[699](#) As of 27 April 2026, 185 military personnel remained in prison.[700](#)

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BBC, La Fiscalía chilena acusa al gobierno de Venezuela de pagar por el asesinato del opositor Ronald Ojeda en Chile, 23 January 2025, [url](#)

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El País, Los militares y sus familiares son los grandes excluidos de la ley de amnistía en Venezuela, 22 February 2026, [url](#); SWI swissinfo.ch, Otorgan arresto domiciliario a presa política venezolana que dio a luz detenida, dice ONG, 19 February 2026, [url](#)

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SWI swissinfo.ch, Dos militares desertores entre venezolanos deportados desde EEUU, dice titular de Interior, 17 February 2025, [url](#); Agencia EFE, Dos militares desertores entre venezolanos deportados desde EEUU, dice titular de Interior, 17 February 2025, [url](#)

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International Crisis Group, The Venezuela Paradigm: Is Trump's Model Intervention a Mirage?, 27 March 2026, [url](#); El País, Venezuela excluye de la amnistía a militares y a quienes instigaron una intervención extranjera, 20 February 2026, [url](#)

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Foro Penal, Foro Penal, n.d., [url](#)