

November 2007. Destruction or Confiscation of Property.

Pastor Toledano’s church is razed to the ground by government officials and all the church's belongings are confiscated. Pastor Toledano is removed from the site by force.

March 2010. Threats.

Members of the Communist Party and agents of the National Police surround Pastor Toledano’s home and threaten to evict him and his family. The officials also threaten to confiscate the church's property.

June-July 2012. Harassment.

Pastor Toledano’s home and church are surrounded in an attempt to intimidate the family and church. In the months following this act of harassment, both the church and the home are broken into numerous times.

June-September 2012. Harassment.

Surveillance of Pastor Toledano’s home and church is carried out from June to September, with several attempted thefts.

February 2013. Harassment.

During a meeting of religious leaders on the church property, Pastor Toledano is approached by the director of a government run business and asked for ownership and permit papers. The director returns with government officials, once again demanding to see paperwork.

January 2014. Harassment.

Three men claiming to be government officials, but showing no ID, arrive at Pastor Toledano’s home and demand to see paperwork, including a construction licence for the property.

October 2015. Harassment.

Early in the morning a man without ID, identifying himself as a Communist Party official, enters Pastor Toledano’s church and home property without permission. He reiterates threats of eviction and church closure.

November 2015. Threats.

Members of Emanuel Church start a church 'sleep in' in an attempt to block government confiscation and demolition efforts.

November 2015. Threats.

Cuban government Planning and Housing officials issue an order to demolish all churches in the Abel Santamaría neighbourhood in the city of Santiago de Cuba. Pastor Toledano leads one of the targeted churches.

February 2016. Destruction or Confiscation of Property.

At 5am, the property where the church is located and where Pastor Toledano lives is surrounded by military, state security and police. Pastor Toledano is away at an event at the time. His wife and 3 daughters are taken and held incommunicado. Around 40 church leaders and members are detained and held in a local school, and hundreds of others are held in police units. The church and home are demolished.

February 2016. Threats.

The Santiago de Cuba chief of police tells Pastor Toledano that charges are being prepared against him concerning the alleged illegal possession of chairs and supports for the roof of the destroyed church.

November 2016 and the following days. Threats.

Following the church's demolition, the congregation of Emanuel Church, moves to worship on land belonging to a friend of the church. Whilst Pastor Toledano is travelling overseas, the Cuban government threatens to confiscate the land from the owners if they continue to allow church use and give them 24 hours to evict the church or face a fine. The landowner requests that the church stop holding their meetings on his land.

October 2017. Arbitrary Detention.

Rudisvel Rivera Robert and his wife Geidis Sarmiento own the land where Emanuel Church is now based. Rudisvel is summoned to the police unit in Micro 3, El Salao. He is detained and interrogated for supposed 'public disorder'. This is the third time he has been interrogated about Pastor Toledano and Emanuel Church.

August 2019. Threats.

Following a police summons and interrogation a few days earlier, Pastor Toledano is informed by the Department of Physical Planning that an inspection will be carried out on a plot of land where Emanuel Church is constructing a new building. The owners of the land where the church currently meets are threatened and forced to sign a document prohibiting church services on their property.

1 NOV
2007

5 MAR
2010

JUN/JUL
2012

JUN-
SEPT
2012

16 FEB
2013

8 JAN
2014

13 OCT
2015

13 NOV
2015

27 NOV
2015

5 FEB
2016

24 FEB
2016

1 NOV
2016

18 OCT
2017

28 AUG
2019

30 AUG
2019

6 SEPT
2019

7 OCT
2019

8 MAR
2020

10 FEB
2021

7 JUN
2021

30 SEPT
2021

4 OCT
2021



August 2019. Destruction or Confiscation of Property.

A Physical Planning inspector comes to the location where Pastor Toledano’s congregation meets and serves an order to Rudisvel Rivera Robert requiring him to remove the perimeter fence from his yard which would give the government legal grounds to expropriate the property. Rudisvel refuses to evict the church and is fined.

September 2019. Harassment.

Pastor Toledano is summoned by the police again. He is threatened with imprisonment and verbally attacked by officials. They fine him 500 pesos and issue a new decree threatening to demolish the place where the church meets.

October 2019. Threats.

Two Physical Planning inspectors come to the location where Emanuel Church meets. They tell Geidis Sarmiento, the wife of Rudisvel Rivera Robert, that she will be fined since her husband will not evict the church. The fine is applied to Ms. Sarmiento because the law does not allow the same person to be fined twice for the same reason in less than 30 days. The fines applied to Geidis and Rudisvel add up to a total of 1000 pesos. The two earn less than 300 pesos per month.

March 2020. Harassment.

Pastor Toledano hires a basketball court as venue for a worship event. He and his guests arrive with the legal documents for the venue hire in hand. Upon entering the building, he is informed by the administrator that the contract was cancelled because a senior State Security officer forbade the worship event from taking place there. The administrator returns the money and apologizes. A dozen State Security officers are present, intimidating the congregation. Pastor Toledano is forced to move the event to an open field.

February 2021. Harassment.

A Police officer appears at Emanuel Church, where Yoandry Cruzata is working as a bricklayer. Yoandry is arrested and taken to the Palace of Justice to be put on trial for "spreading the epidemic", which carries a three-year sentence. The case is shared internationally and the summary trial is aborted. Yoandry is released under the threat of a future case being brought against him at the discretion of State Security.

June 2021. Harassment.

A Public Health inspector and a State Security agent arrive at Emanuel Church. Pastor Toledano quickly goes to meet the officials. Despite explaining to the inspector that due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the church has not met there for more than six months, the inspector says that he has an order to issue a "Warning Letter" to the owner of the property. Pastor Toledano protests that this is religious harassment and refuses to sign the document. The administrative measure is applied anyway.

September 2021. Arbitrary Detention.

Two State Security agents posing as inspectors appear at Rudisvel Rivera Robert’s home to investigate alleged construction infractions. They search the house and find nothing illegal, then identify themselves as state security officials and demand that Rudisvel stop lending his yard to the Emanuel Church for gatherings. Rudisvel refuses and the agents return with police officers who arrest him in front of his three children, who cry as they watch their father being taken away. He is threatened for several hours at the Abel Santamaría District Police Station and released without charge or fine.

October 2021. Harassment.

Two policemen and an investigator arrive at the church and inform the property owner, Rudisvel Rivera Robert, that they are there to ‘reconstruct the facts’ at the scene of the ‘crime’ in light of the pending criminal charges against Pastor Toledano. Although they do not present a warrant, the police enter the property and spend two hours measuring and making drawings despite Rudisvel’s protests. The police reportedly described Pastor Toledano as a common criminal and said he would be tried and convicted.