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Mexico is put to the test by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights over a torture case

On the eve of a preliminary objections hearing to be held by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights with regard to a torture case involving Mexico, Amnesty International is calling on the Mexican Government to cooperate fully with the proceeding by fulfilling the human rights commitments it has repeatedly made.

It is the first time since Mexico accepted the jurisdiction of the Costa Rica-based Inter-American Court of Human Rights in December 1988 that it has been summoned before it.

In January 2003 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights filed an application before the Inter-American Court requesting it to find the State of Mexico responsible for failing to comply with several provisions of the American Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture and to provide proper compensation for such violations, which were committed against Alfonso Martín del Campo Dodd who is serving a 50-year prison sentence for a crime which he denies having committed. The application was filed after the Mexican authorities failed to comply with the recommendations made by the Inter-American Commission in October 2002.

Alfonso Martín del Campo was arrested on 30 May 1992 and taken to the Office of the Attorney General for the Federal District. According to the information provided by the petitioners, there is abundant hard evidence to indicate that at least 10 officers of the judicial police subjected Alfonso Martín del Campo to intense torture to force him to sign a self-incriminating statement.

Amnesty International has repeatedly reminded the Mexican State of its duty to ensure that any evidence obtained through coercion or the use of torture is inadmissible and that all allegations of the use of torture are subjected to thorough, immediate, independent and impartial investigations.

The hearing at which the Inter-American Court of Human Rights will determine whether the case is admissible is due to take place on 27 April in Costa Rica.

For further information on the case of Alfonso Martín del Campo, see Amnesty International document: Unfair trials: unsafe convictions

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR410072003?open&of=ENG-MEX>

