

PUBLIC

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Fear for Safety/ Fear of Torture

14 July 2000

BOLIVIA

**Juan Carlos Caballero, Oscar Martin Serna, Ronald Alberto Horna Aranda  
(Peruvian citizens),  
Carlos Alberto Simoes Junior, (Brazilian citizen)**

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There is serious concern for the safety of four prisoners held in isolation-punishment cells in the high security prison of San Pedro de Chonchocoro (*Penitenciaría de San Pedro de Chonchocoro*) in La Paz, Bolivia, two of whom Amnesty International knows have already been tortured.

Following the death, in circumstances still to be clarified, of three prisoners in Chonchocoro on 28 and 29 June 2000, four prisoners, Juan Carlos Caballero, Oscar Martin Serna, Ronald Alberto Horna Aranda and Carlos Alberto Simoes Junior, were sent to isolation cells. An Amnesty International delegation visiting Bolivia at the time was able to visit the prisoners on 30 June. Two of them, Juan Carlos Caballero and Carlos Alberto Simoes Junior, were in isolation-punishment cells known as "*El Bote*". They had been tortured by members of the police some of them wearing hoods, while being held in wrist and ankle restraints. Both men showed clear signs of having been severely beaten. All of the four men were detained in "*El Bote*" cells by 8 July.

The conditions in "*El Bote*" cells are inhuman and degrading, well below the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Each cell measures only two metres by one and a half metres and is cold, damp and without proper bedding or sanitation.

On 8 July, members of the Bolivian non-governmental organization *Asamblea Permanente de los Derechos Humanos*, Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, were eventually allowed to visit the four men who reported that they have had no access to relatives or lawyers and a request to be examined by a forensic doctor had been denied. The four were frightened for their lives.

Police guards denied representatives of the Catholic church body, *Pastoral Carcelaria* and the prison Chaplain access to the four men. Female visitors to the High Security Prison have reportedly been subjected to degrading body searches.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:**

- Expressing concern at the torture inflicted on Juan Carlos Caballero and Carlos Alberto Simoes Junior and the inhuman conditions in the isolation area where all four prisoners are held;
- asking that the four prisoners are protected from future torture or ill-treatment;
- requesting an immediate, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the torture and for those found responsible to be brought to justice;
- asking for the four men to be given immediate access to lawyers and to a forensic doctor;
- asking that the four men be kept in conditions of imprisonment which meet the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners;
- asking for the isolation-punishment cells known as "*El Bote*" to be closed immediately.

**APPEALS TO:**

**Minister of Interior**

Ministro de Gobierno  
Sr. Guillermo Fortún  
Ministerio de Gobierno  
Av. Arce, esq. Belisario Salinas  
La Paz, Bolivia  
**Fax: +5912 442 589**

**Salutrition: Dear Minister / Sr. Ministro**

**Minister of Justice and Human Rights**

Ministro de Justicia y Derechos Humanos  
Dr. Juan Chahin,  
Ministerio de Justicia  
Avenida 16 de Julio (El Prado), 1769  
La Paz Bolivia  
**Fax: +5912 392 982**

**Salutation: Dear Minister/ Sr. Ministro**

**Prisons Authority**

Dirección General de Régimen Penitenciario  
Dr Jorge Daniel AYLLON ZAMORANO  
Avenida Arce 2316  
La Paz Bolivia  
**Fax: +5912 442 187 / 441 238**  
**Salutation: Sr. Director/ Mr. Director**

**COPIES TO:**

**President of Bolivia**

Excmo Sr. Presidente  
General Hugo Banzer  
Palacio de Gobierno  
La Paz, Bolivia  
**Fax: +5912 391216 and 392606**

**Salutation: Dear President / Sr. Presidente**

**Church body**

Pastoral Carcelaria  
C/O CEPAS  
Calle Ingavi, Esq. Pichincha  
La Paz, Bolivia

**Newspaper**

Presencia  
Avenida Mariscal Santa Cruz 2150  
La Paz, Bolivia

and to diplomatic representatives of BOLIVIA accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 August 2000.