

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 19/10/96

14 March 1996

Further information on UA 68/96 (AMR 19/09/96, 8 March 1996) - Prisoner of conscience / Medical concern

BRAZIL Diolinda Alves de Souza (f), aged 25, land reform activist

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On 12 March 1996 the Higher Court of Justice, *Superior Tribunal de Justiça*, ruled on one of four *Habeas Corpus* petitions presented on behalf of Diolinda Alves de Souza, Felinto Procópio, Laércio Barbosa and Claudemiro Marques Cano, and others.

The court ruled that the four be released on bail of approximately US\$700 each. They had been held on charges of "forming a criminal band" since 25 January 1996. The court reportedly argued that the charge was not applicable to land occupations.

On hearing the decision Diolinda Alves de Souza said "I'm only thinking about seeing my little boy and having a ice-cream with him". During her 48 days in detention she had not seen her 2-year-old son.

Later that night, after bail was posted, the four were released.

The Higher Court of Justice also ruled on preventive detention orders against Diolinda Alves de Souza's husband, José Rainha Juniór, and Márcio Barreto - both leaders of the Landless Rural Worker's Movement who had been in hiding.

The court suspended the prison orders in favour of their conditional liberty with bail. The bail having been posted on 12 March, they are no longer considered fugitives from the law.

No further action by the Urgent Action Network is required at present. Thank you for all the appeals that you have made so far.