

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 174/92 Death Threats

27 May 1992

BRAZIL: Josefa Batista de Oliveira, female
Brother of Josefa Batista de Oliveira (first name unknown)
Dimas S. Souza Neves
Leila S. Jacob Bisinoto, female

(all human rights workers at the Centro Diocesano de Direitos Humanos Dom Maximo Biennes, Dom Maximo Biennes Human Rights Centre)

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the four people named above who are being subjected to anonymous death threats and are human rights workers at the Centro Diocesano de Direitos Humanos Dom Maximo Biennes, Dom Maximo Biennes Human Rights Centre, in the city of Cáceres, Mato Grosso state.

According to information received by Amnesty International, on 10 April 1992 Josefa Batista de Oliveira's brother received a telephone call in which he was reportedly told that "the Centre's [Dom Maximo Biennes Human Rights Centre] personnel are all marked down to die and you are the first one on the list", "O pessoal do Centro estão (sic) todos marcados para morrer e você é o primeiro da lista."

Following this incident, on 27 April 1992, Josefa Batista de Oliveira was forced into a car by an unknown person who allegedly told her that he was not playing and that he could rape her, but that her time had not arrived yet. She was told "go and tell your folk now. Tell them that we are not playing", "agora vá lá avisar aquele povo. Diga a eles que nos não estamos brincando não." Josefa Batista de Oliveira was then released.

The Dom Maximo Biennes Human Rights Centre continues to receive threatening anonymous telephone calls. According to reports, Dimas S. Souza Neves and Leila S. Jacob Bisinoto have also been the target of such threats.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Death threats are a common feature of rural violence in Brazil. They are part of a "culture of terror" aimed at intimidating individuals and to make them abandon their struggle. Peasants, trade union leaders as well as their advisers and human rights workers in general have been the targets of death threats, assaults, abductions and killings in rural Brazil. Amnesty International is concerned that those who have carried out intimidation and killings of peasants have done so with a high degree of impunity, as have their leaders and advisers.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the reported death threats to Josefa Batista de Oliveira, Josefa Batista de Oliveira's brother (first name unknown), Dimas S. Souza Neves

and Leila S. Jacob Bisinoto;

- urging that the death threats be thoroughly investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice;

- requesting that steps be taken to ensure that the four people named above and all other human rights workers of the Dom Maximo Biennes Human Rights Centre are able to carry out their work without fear for their physical safety.

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APPEALS TO:

1. Minister of Justice

Sr. Celio Borja

Ministro da Justiça

Ministério da Justiça

Esplanada dos Ministerios

Bloco 23

70.064 Brasilia - DF, Brasil

Telegrams: Ministro Justiça, Brasilia, Brasil

Telexes: 611003 MNJU BR; 611088 MNJU BR; 612313 MNJU BR

Faxes: + 55 61 224 4357

(Salutation: Sr. Ministro de Justiça / Dear Minister)

2. State Governor, Mato Grosso

Exmo. Sr. Governador do

Estado do Mato Grosso

Sr. Jaime Campos

Palacio Paiguas

Centro Politico e Administrativo

78.000 Cuiabá - MT

Brasil

Telegrams: Governador Mato Grosso, Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brazil

Telexes: 654265 sspb br

(Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency)

3. State Secretary of Public Security

Exmo. Sr. Secretário de Segurança Pública

Estado de Mato Grosso

Sr. Oscar Travassos

Centro Politico e Administrativo

78.000 Cuiabá - MT

Brasil

Telegrams: Secretário de Segurança Publica, Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brazil

(Salutation: Sr. Secretário / Dear Sir)

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Dom Maximo Biennes Human Rights Centre)

Centro Diocesano de Direitos Humanos Dom Maximo Biennes

Circ. 023/92

Cáceres - MT

Brasil

Legal Assistance Office for Grassroots Organizations

GAJOP

Gabinete de Assessoria Jurídica
As Organizações Populares
Rua Vinte e Sete de Janeiro 181
53.110 Olinda - PE
Brasil

and to diplomatic representatives of Brazil in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 July 1992.