

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 19/031/2001

UA 326/01

Fear for Safety/Possible extrajudicial execution

19 December 2001

**BRAZIL** Dept. José Geraldo Torres da Silva (m), State Deputy (aka 'Zé Geraldo'),  
Julio Cesar dos Santos (m, aka 'Pelado')

**Killed:** Ademir Alfeu Federicci (m, aka 'Dema')

---

José Geraldo Torres da Silva, who sits in the Pará state legislature, has received death threats because of his campaign against corruption and environmental destruction in the Altamira region of Pará. An environmentalist who campaigned with him was murdered in August: Julio Cesar dos Santos has been arrested and charged with the killing, but the people believed to be behind the murder are reportedly attempting to silence him. Amnesty International believes that the lives of both men are in grave danger.

Ecologist and land activist Ademir Alfeu Federicci was a leader of the grassroots organisation *Movimento pelo Desenvolvimento da Transamazônica e do Xingu* (MDTX), the Movement for the Development of the Transamazon and the Xingu. He and José Geraldo had publicised the large-scale corruption surrounding the distribution of funds in government-sponsored projects in the Altamira area, and the ecological impact of some of these projects, such as the Belo Monte dam on the Xingu river.

Ademir Alfeu had been threatened many times because of his condemnation of corrupt politicians and illegal loggers. Early in the morning of 25 August he tackled an unknown intruder in his house, and was shot dead in front of his wife and son.

Federal Police officers and the MDTX have said they believe this was a contract killing. There is a long tradition in Pará of land activists being murdered by gunmen hired by landowners and politicians with the knowledge or acquiescence of the authorities, and Ademir Alfeu is one of at least nine land activists believed to have been killed by hired gunmen in the state this year.

Despite this, the civil police claim that Ademir Alfeu was killed during a bungled burglary, and obtained a confession from Julio Cesar dos Santos shortly after the event took place. Julio Cesar dos Santos has since claimed that he only confessed to the burglary after he was tortured by Pará state Civil Police officers. The public prosecutor's office refused to open a prosecution solely on the basis of a confession, and has called for a new police investigation.

People linked to the killing of Ademir Alfeu are reportedly trying to silence Julio Cesar dos Santos. A few days ago he survived a stabbing by another detainee at the *Penitenciaria de Altamira* prison, in what appears to have been an attempt kill him.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Violence has reached critical levels in recent months in Pará. Killings of land activists are rarely investigated properly and those responsible are rarely if ever punished, often because witnesses are intimidated or killed. An investigative commission of Federal deputies traveled to Pará in October 2001 and recommended that a Federal police team be immediately sent to the area to investigate and bring to justice those involved in perpetuating the cycle of violence in the state.

The Federal Government's fund for investment in the Amazon region, known as SUDAM, has been the focus of much controversy. The funds, supposedly destined for private industrial projects for the region have been the centre of reports of widespread corruption. The President of the Senate, former Pará governor Jader Barbalho, was forced to resign his seat in congress following allegations of his involvement in the SUDAM corruption scandal.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Portuguese, English or your own language:**

- calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of state deputy José Geraldo Torres da Silva, and provide him with the protection he needs to continue his work;
- urging the authorities to investigate the allegations that Julio Cesar dos Santos was tortured by Pará state Civil Police officers, and attacked in prison, and calling for measures to be implemented to ensure his safety;
- pointing out that the Pará state public prosecutor's office has expressed concern at the Pará state Civil Police investigation into the killing of Ademir Alfeu Federicci, and urging the authorities to order a new investigation by the Federal police;
- noting the reported links between Pará state police and those who commit human rights violations in Pará, and calling for an immediate and impartial Federal police investigation into the critical human rights situation in the state.

**APPEALS TO:**

Governor of Pará State

Exmo. Sr. Governador do Estado do Pará  
 Sr. Almir José de Oliveira Gabriel  
 Palácio dos Despachos  
 Rodovia Augusto Montenegro KM 9  
 66823-010 Belém, PA, Brazil

**Fax: + 55 91 248 0133**

**Salutation: Vossa Excelência/Your Excellency**

Pará State Secretary for Public Security

Secretário de Segurança Pública do Estado do Pará  
 Sr. Paulo Celso P. Sette Câmara  
 Rua Arcipreste Manoel Teodoro 305  
 66023-700 Belém, PA, Brazil

**Fax: + 55 91 225 2644**

**Salutation: Sr Secretário/ Dear Secretary**

Federal Minister of Justice

Exmo. Sr. Ministro da Justiça do Brasil  
 Dr. Aloysio Nunes Ferreira  
 Ministério da Justiça  
 Esplanada dos Ministérios  
 Bloco 'T', 4º andar, Sala 400  
 70064-900 Brasília, DF, Brazil

**Fax: + 55 61 322 6817/225 0289**

**Salutation: Vossa Excelência/Your Excellency**

Secretary of State for Human Rights

Exmo. Sr. Secretário de Estado dos Direitos Humanos  
 Paulo Sergio Pinheiro

Secretaria de Estado dos Direitos Humanos  
Ministério da Justiça  
Esplanada dos Ministérios  
Bloco T, 4º andar, Sala 420  
70064-900 Brasília, DF, Brazil  
**Fax: + 55 61 223 2260/226 7980**  
**Salutation: Sr Secretário/ Dear Secretary**

**COPIES TO:**

MDTX - *Movimento pelo Desenvolvimento da Transamazônica e do Xingu*  
Rua Anchieta 2092  
Bairro Perpetuo Socorro  
68371-190, Altamira, Pará  
Brazil

and to diplomatic representatives of Brazil accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 February 2002.