

**CHILE** Rodolfo Retamales Leiva (m)

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Political prisoner Rodolfo Retamales has filed a criminal complaint after he was reportedly beaten by a prison guard, and Amnesty International is concerned that he may face reprisals.

Rodolfo Retamales is an inmate at the *Cárcel de Alta Seguridad* (high security prison) in the capital, Santiago. On 31 October he was taken back to the main prison building from the prison hospital in a prison van, after an operation on his right knee. The van stopped in the prison yard known as *patio de carga*, and a prison guard (*gendarme*) apparently started kicking him in the knee, without provocation. None of the other guards present intervened, or did anything to help Rodolfo Retamales, who was screaming in pain.

Once inside the prison, he was examined by the prison doctor, who reportedly recorded a bleeding injury *atribuible a traumatismo*, "possibly attributable to trauma". The doctor did specify that the new injury was not caused by the operation.

Lawyers acting for Rodolfo Retamales filed a criminal complaint (*Querrela Criminal*) about the incident on 5 November before the Sixth Criminal Court of Santiago (*Sexto Juzgado del Crimen de Santiago*).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International has repeatedly expressed concern about conditions in high security prisons in Chile. In January 1997 there were reports that several political prisoners had been ill-treated after four other prisoners escaped from a high security prison in Santiago. There were also reports that prisoners who complained about ill-treatment had been threatened with reprisals.

Article 19.1 of Chile's constitution guarantees the right to life and the right to physical and psychological integrity. Chile is a State Party to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which forbids torture and any practise which constitutes cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

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

- expressing concern at reports that a prison guard at the *Cárcel de Alta Seguridad* (high security prison) in Santiago has ill-treated political prisoner Rodolfo Retamales;
- asking the authorities to provide him with all necessary medical care until he has fully recovered;
- asking the authorities to order a thorough, independent and conclusive investigation into the incident, and asking them to inform you of the progress of the investigation;
- seeking assurances that Rodolfo Retamales will not face reprisals from the prison authorities because he has filed a complaint about the attack.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of Justice  
Ministro de Justicia  
Sr. José Antonio Gómez

Ministerio de Justicia, Moradé 107, Santiago, Chile  
**Telegram:Ministro Justicia, Santiago, Chile**  
**Salutation:Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**  
**Fax:+ 56 2 695 45 58- 698 70 98**

Minister of Interior  
Ministro del Interior  
Sr. José Miguel Insulza Salinas  
Ministerio del Interior, Palacio de la Moneda, Santiago, Chile  
**Telegram:Ministro del Interior, Santiago, Chile**  
**Salutation:Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**  
**Fax:+ 562 696 87 40 / 699 21 65**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Rights  
Director of Human Rights  
Embajador Alejandro Salinas  
Dirección de Derechos Humanos  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores,  
Morandé 519, Santiago, Chile  
**Telegram:Director of Human Rights, Santiago, Chile**  
**Salutation:Sr. Embajador / Dear Ambassador**  
**Fax:+ 562 696 87 96 / 672 62 74**  
**+ 562 699 07 83**

**COPIES TO:**

National Director of Prison Guard  
Director Nacional de Gendarmería de Chile  
Sr. Hugo Espinoza Grimalt  
Rosas 1274  
Santiago, Chile  
**Fax: + 562 671 49 36**

Director of the High Security Prison  
Sr. Mayor Henry Bravo  
Jefe de la Unidad Carcelaria de Alta Seguridad  
Penitenciaría de Santiago  
Chile

and to diplomatic representatives of Chile accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 December 2001.