

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 25/30/92

Distr: UA/SC

UA 392/92 Ill-treatment/Legal Concern

14 December 1992

CUBA: Elizardo SÁNCHEZ SANTA CRUZ) human rights
 Rodolfo GONZÁLEZ) activists

Amnesty International is seriously concerned about the arrest of the above two human rights activists on 10 December 1992 (the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and the reported severe beating of Elizardo Sánchez Santa Cruz by state security officials at the time of his arrest.

Elizardo Sánchez, former professor of philosophy at Havana University, is President of the Comisión Cubana de Derechos Humanos y Reconciliación Nacional (CCDHRN), Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation. According to reports received by Amnesty International, state security agents broke into a house Elizardo Sánchez was visiting in the Nuevo Vedado neighbourhood of Havana on 10 December 1992. After ransacking and destroying much of the contents of the house, the security agents beat Elizardo Sánchez to the point that he virtually lost consciousness. He was then taken by the same state security agents to the Carlos J. Finlay military hospital in Havana. Following his arrest, an "act of repudiation" (*acto de repudio*) was carried out at his family home by a large group of people who chanted pro-government slogans and threw stones at the house. Such acts, which have become frequent in recent months are known in many cases to involve the so-called Destacamentos Populares de Respuesta Rápida, People's Rapid Response Detachments, acting in coordination with the security forces and Communist Party organizations.

The following day Elizardo Sanchez' relatives were allowed to visit him in hospital and confirmed that his face was badly bruised. On Saturday, 12 December, Elizardo Sánchez was reportedly transferred to the Departamento Técnico de Investigaciones, (DTI), the police Technical Investigations Department in Havana. His sister was told by state security agents that he was to be held "pending investigations". Elizardo Sánchez has been detained and imprisoned on a number of occasions in the past for his human rights activities.

Rodolfo González, member of the Comité Cubano Pro Derechos Humanos, (CCPDH), Cuban Committee for Human Rights, was reportedly arrested by state security police after a search of his home in Havana. It is believed he may also be held in the Technical Investigations Department. Several other human rights activists suffered harassment, threats or were physically attacked by hostile crowds in the street on 10 December.

Amnesty International believes that Elizardo Sánchez Santa Cruz and Rodolfo González are prisoners of conscience detained solely on account of their peaceful human rights

activities and political views. Both the CCPDH and the CCDHRN have consistently dissociated themselves for the use of violence in order to bring about political change and greater respect for human rights in Cuba.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Spanish, English or in your own language:

- urging the immediate and unconditional release of Elizardo Sánchez Santa Cruz and Rodolfo González on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience detained solely on account of their legitimate and peaceful activities;

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- expressing concern at the reported ill-treatment of Elizardo Sánchez Santa Cruz at the time of his arrest;

- requesting that there be a thorough and impartial investigation into the reported ill-treatment and that those found responsible be brought to justice;

- urging the Cuban authorities to take all necessary steps to ensure that human rights defenders are able to carry out their peaceful and legitimate activities without fear of reprisals.

APPEALS TO:

1) Presidente

Su Excelencia Dr Fidel Castro Ruz
Presidente del Consejo de Estado
Ciudad de Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Presidente Castro, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511122 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Su Excelencia / Your Excellency

2) Attorney General:

Dr Ramón de la Cruz Ochoa
Fiscal General de la República
Fiscalía General de la República
San Rafael 3, Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Fiscal General, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511456 FISGE

Salutation: Señor Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General

3) Minister of Justice:

Dr Carlos Amat Forés
Ministro de Justicia
Ministerio de Justicia
Calle O No 216, 8vo Piso
e/ 23 y Humboldt, Vedado
Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Ministro Justicia, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511331 MINJU CU

Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

4) President of the People's Supreme Court:

Dr José Raúl Amaro Salup

Presidente del Tribunal Supremo Popular

Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Presidente Tribunal Supremo Popular, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511457 TSUPO

Salutation: Señor Presidente / Dear President

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Coordinating Body of Human Rights Organizations in Cuba:

CODEHU

1040 S.W. 27 Ave. Miami, FL 33135

USA

and to diplomatic representatives of CUBA accredited your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 January 1993.