

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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FEAR OF "Disappearance"

19 October 1990

ECUADOR:

César MOROCHO

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Amnesty International is concerned about the safety of César Morocho, an Ecuatorian Indian leader from Ecuador, who is in charge of a bilingual literacy campaign for the Ministry of Education.

According to reports, César Morocho, leader of the Gatazo Grande community, Chimborazo province, was last seen on 2 October 1990, after receiving numerous anonymous phone calls threatening him with death. The reports say that at 10pm he left a meeting on bilingual education which was being held in the centre of Quito, saying that he was going home. He never arrived at his home and his relatives and friends failed to obtain any information of his whereabouts.

His case was reported to the police and the Servicio de Investigaciones Criminales, SIC, the police investigative service.

César Morocho is the brother-in-law of Osvaldo Cuvi, another Ecuatorian Indian leader of the Chimborazo province, who was reportedly shot dead by members of the military in June 1989. The reports also indicate that Morocho had publicly denounced the death of his brother-in-law and a few days after his death led a march from Gatazo Grande to Riobamba to protest his killing and demanding sanctions against those responsible for it.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Between 4 and 10 of June Indian communities from the provinces of Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Chimborazo and Imbabura took over the Santo Domingo church in Quito. They demanded new schools, the return of land and the release of their leader who had been imprisoned. Although the protest included the blocking of roads in several provinces, it was not a violent action and had the support of a large part of the church. The authorities responded by sending police and military forces to disperse the public meetings, which resulted in injuries caused by bullets and tear-gas bombs, detentions and the death of Osvaldo Cuvi.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Telexes/Telegrams/Airmail letters:

- expressing concern about the reported "disappearance" of Indian leader César Morocho;
- urging that an investigation is opened to determine his whereabouts;
- urging that if in detention he be humanely treated and granted access to relatives and lawyers and a doctor.

APPEALS TO:

Dr Rodrigo Borja Cevallos
Presidente de la República del Ecuador
Palacio de Gobierno
García Moreno 1043
Quito, Ecuador

Telegrams: Presidente Borja, Quito, Ecuador
Telexes: 22375 PREREP ED
22201 PREREP ED

Señor Andrés Vallejo Arco
Ministro de Gobierno y Policía
Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía
Espejo y Benalcázar
Quito, Ecuador

Telegrams: Ministro Gobierno Vallejo, Quito, Ecuador
Telexes: 22354 MINGOB ED

COPIES TO:

Señores
CEDHU
Apartado Postal
Quito, Ecuador (Human Rights Organization)

and to diplomatic representatives of Ecuador in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section office if sending appeals after 30 November 1990.