

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture/Legal concern

9 July 1986

EL SALVADOR: Human rights workers

Amnesty International is concerned at renewed attacks directed against human rights workers, relief and church workers in El Salvador.

On 28 June 1986 the Roman Catholic Social Secretariat of the Archdiocese in San Salvador received death threats by telephone. The threats were directed against five of its social workers, including the leader of the Secretariat, Father Octavio Cruz. The four other workers threatened were Victor Gonzalez, Jorge Pozuelo, Petrona Serrato and Laura Guzman. According to reports, the caller stated that the five should leave the country within eight days or they would be killed. On the same weekend, several doctors and medical workers who work with displaced people housed by the Catholic Church are also reported to have received death threats. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety.

Amnesty International has also received reports that Andres Antonio Lopez Gamez, aged 47 and a relief worker with Caritas, the church-based relief agency attached to the Archdiocese, was detained between 9am and 10am on 30 June 1986 in Puerto La Libertad, La Libertad city. According to the reports, he was subsequently taken to National Police headquarters in San Salvador, where he is being held under investigation. Andres Lopez is also a member of the *Federación de Asociaciones Cooperativas de Productos Agropecuarios de El Salvador* (FEDECOOPADES), Federation of Agricultural Produce Cooperatives of El Salvador, a cooperative movement linked to the church.

Amnesty International has also received reports of the detention on 6 July 1986 of Gloria Galan Garcia, aged 22, and Elizabet Galan Garcia, aged 20. Gloria Galan is a member of the *Comite de Madres y Familiares de Presos Políticos Desaparecidos y Asesinados de El Salvador "Monsenor Oscar Arnulfo Romero"* (Co-Madres), Committee of Mothers and Relatives of Political Prisoners, the "Disappeared" and Assassinated of El Salvador "Monsenor Oscar Arnulfo Romero". Elizabet and Gloria Galan Garcia were detained by several heavily armed members of the *Policia de Hacienda* (Treasury Police) dressed in civilian clothes, driving a white pick-up truck, in Santa Ana city. The Treasury Police subsequently acknowledged that both women were being held under investigation at their headquarters in San Salvador.

These threats and arrests follow a series of human rights violations directed against church and relief workers over a prolonged period in El Salvador, including the detention of ten human rights workers during the second part of May 1986. After ten days in incommunicado detention, one of them, Luz Janeth Alfaro Pena (known internationally as Michelle Salinas) who had worked with the *Comisión de Derechos de El Salvador (no-gubernamental)*, (CDHES) Non-governmental Human Rights Commission of El Salvador, was presented at a press conference at the Treasury Police headquarters on 30 May 1986, during which she made allegations about links between herself, national human rights, church and international aid organizations and the armed opposition. She said she and her sister Ana-Wilma, arrested on 25 May 1986, had placed themselves in the protective custody of the armed forces. Amnesty International was informed that seven of those detained were tortured while they were held at the Treasury Police headquarters, including being stripped, blindfolded, handcuffed and repeatedly beaten before being forced to sign declarations that they were not permitted to read. All seven remain in detention.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express or airmail letters:

- expressing concern about the death threats directed against the five social workers attached to the Social Secretariat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese, as well as those received by the medical personnel working with the displaced of the Archdiocese

- urging that measures be urgently taken to guarantee their physical safety so that they may continue their lawful activities in providing humanitarian aid, and that an investigation be undertaken to establish responsibility for these death threats

- expressing concern also about the detention of Gloria and Elizabet Galan Garcia and Andres Antonio Lopez Gamez and urging that they be released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and promptly tried according to international standards for a fair trial

- expressing concern about numerous allegations of torture of political prisoners while in administrative detention and urging that Gloria and Elizabet Galan Garcia and Andres Lopez Gamez be humanly treated while in detention

APPEALS TO:

Exmo. Sr. José Napoleón Duarte
Presidente de la República
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams to: Presidente Duarte,
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telexes to: 20445 cgfa sal,
20245 rs sal

Cor. Reynaldo López Nuila
Vice-Ministro de Defensa y de
Seguridad Pública
Ministerio de Defensa y de Seguridad
Pública
Doble Vía a Santa Tecla
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams to: Vice-Ministro Defensa
San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Dr. Julio Alfredo Samayoa
Ministro de Justicia
Ministerio de Justicia
3a Av. Norte y 11a Calle Poniente
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Minister of Justice)

Mons. Arturo Rivera y Damas
Arzobispo
Arzobispado de San Salvador
1 Calle Poniente 3412, Apdo. 01-126
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Archbishop of El Salvador)

Dr. José Francisco Guerrero
Procurador General
1a Av. Norte y 5a Calle Poniente
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Attorney General)

El Mundo
2a Av. Norte No. 211
San Salvador, El Salvador

(newspaper)

and to Salvadorian diplomatic representatives in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 August 1986.