

PUBLIC

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UA 26/03

Fear for Safety

27 January 2003

GUATEMALA

Tatiana Morales Valdizon (f), Special Prosecutor for Human Rights Defenders  
Other members of the *Ministerio Publico (MP)*, Public Prosecutor's Office

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Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Tatiana Morales Valdizon and other members of the *Ministerio Publico (MP)*, Public Prosecutor's Office following an increasing wave of attacks and threats against human rights defenders.

Tatiana Morales Valdizon has the specific mandate of investigating human rights violations committed against human rights defenders. Together with a technical team from the MP she travelled to the village of Chocon, in the Department of Izabal in order to interview potential witnesses. This was part of an investigation into alleged human rights violations, including extra-judicial execution and illegal raids by former members of the *Departamento de Operaciones Antinarcoicas (DOAN)*, the department of Anti-Narcotics Operations. As they conducted the interviews, a number of vehicles reportedly drove past the location in Chocon.

On 23 January, as the party returned from Chocon, they were pursued by several cars. They managed to avoid their pursuers and reported the incident enroute to the *Policia Nacional Civil (PNC)* National Civil Police. Later, however they were forced to stop following a high speed chase with an unknown vehicle. They were unhurt, but remain severely worried by the incident.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Members of the DOAN have been implicated in serious human rights violations (see UA 65/02, AMR 34/012/2002, 28 February 2002). The agency, which had received almost \$2 million of annual aid from the United States, was abolished in October 2002 and a new drug agency subsequently established, after many of its agents were implicated in corruption scandals, precipitating severe criticism from the US government.

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

- urging the authorities to offer immediate protection to Tatiana Morales Valdizon and other members of the *Ministerio Publico (MP)*, Public Prosecutor's Office;
- calling on the authorities to carry out an immediate, exhaustive and impartial investigation into this incident and making the results public;

#### APPEALS TO:

##### President of the Republic of Guatemala

Lic. Alfonso Portillo Cabrera

Presidente de la Republica de Guatemala

6a. Avenida "A" 4-41, Zona 1, Guatemala, Guatemala

**Telegram:** Presidente de la Republica de Guatemala, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Fax:** + 502 238 3579

**Salutation:** Dear Mr President/Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente

**Director General of the National Civil Police**

Comisario General Raul Arquimedes Manchame Leiva  
Director General de la Policia Nacional Civil  
6a Avenida 13-71, Zona 1  
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Telegram: Director General de la Policia, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Fax: + 502 251 9382**

**Salutation: Dear Director/Senor Director**

**Secretary of Strategic Analysis**

Secretario de Analisis Estrategico  
Secretaria de Analisis Estrategico  
6a Avenida 'A' 3-53, Zona 1  
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Telegram: Secretario de Analisis Estrategico, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Fax: + 502 232 2886**

**Salutation: Dear Secretary/Senor Secretario**

**Attorney General**

Lic. Carlos David de Leon Argueta  
Fiscal General de la Republica  
Fiscalia General del Ministerio Publico  
8a. Avenida 10-57, Tercer nivel  
Zona 1, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Telegram: Fiscal General de la Republica, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Fax: + 502 221 2718**

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Senor Fiscal General**

**COPIES TO:**

**Human Rights Procurator**

Lic. Sergio Morales  
Procuraduria de los Derechos Humanos  
12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1  
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Telefax: +502 230 0874-76**

**Fax: +502 238 1734**

**Newspaper**

Diario Prensa Libre  
13 Calle 9-31, Zona I  
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Fax: +502 251 8768/ 230 2193/ 230 2257**

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 3 March 2003.