

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 34/58/90
Distr: UA/SC

UA 406/90

Assassination Attempt

9 October 1990

GUATEMALA: Juan José RODIL PERALTA

Amnesty International is concerned at the reported assassination attempt against opposition congressional candidate and former Minister of the Interior, Juan José Rodil Peralta, on 5 October 1990.

According to the information received by Amnesty International, Juan José Rodil Peralta, a congressional candidate for the Unión del Centro Nacional (UCN), National Centre Union, was returning from a campaign tour in the countryside when he was ambushed by gunmen travelling in three cars. The gunmen surrounded Juan Rodil's armoured car near his residence in Guatemala City and opened fire, but he escaped injury.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has been gravely concerned at what appears to be a serious deterioration in the human rights situation in Guatemala in the months prior to the general elections scheduled for 11 November. Victims have included trade unionists, grass roots organizations, human rights workers, students, peasants, displaced persons, church and opposition political groups. In recent months several members of Congress have received death threats, and the Congressional representative for Jalapa department, Otto Rolando Ruano, also belonging to the UCN, was assassinated in July as he was entering his house (see UA 328/90, AMR 34/47/90, 10 August). So far, the identity of the killers has not been established. Three political parties have reportedly suffered grenade attacks against their headquarters since April. Although the identity of the perpetrators has not been established, the choice of victim, the manner in which abuses were carried out, and the weapons used, in many cases indicated that official security forces were involved in the abuse in question, acting in the guise of the so-called "death squads". Amnesty International has also been concerned at the failure of the government to vigorously investigate human rights abuses, and fears that this failure has been a contributing factor in the escalating violence.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the assassination attempt on Juan José Rodil Peralta;
- urging that a full, impartial investigation be made into the incident, that its findings be made public and those responsible be brought to justice;
- urging that the physical safety of Juan José Rodil Peralta and other UCN members be guaranteed.

APPEALS TO

S.E. Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo
Presidente de la República de Guatemala
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala

Tel: +502 22 1212, +502 22 2266

Fax: +502 253 7472

Telex: 5331 CAPRES GU

Telegrams: Presidente Cerezo, Guatemala, Guatemala

Gen. Carlos Augusto Morales Villatoro
Ministro de Gobernación
Despacho Ministerial
Oficina No. 8, Primer Nivel
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala

Tel: + 502 2 21212/19, ext 500; 518105-6
Fax: + 502 2 518105
Telex: 5085 MINGOB GU
Telegrams: Ministro Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala

Brig. Gral. Juan Leonel Bolaños
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala

Tel: +502 22 1212, ext 2226
Fax: +502 253 7472
Telex: 5361 COMGUA GU
Telegrams: Ministro Defensa Bolanos, Guatemala, Guatemala

Lic. Mario Roberto Yllescas Aguirre
Procurador General de la Nación
Procuraduría General de la Nación
7a Avenida 7-78
Edificio Centroamericano
Zona 4, Guatemala
Guatemala

Telephone +502 264697, +502 2313656 or +502 2518385

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de Derechos Humanos
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-61
Zona 2,
Guatemala, Guatemala

Telegrams: Procurador Derechos Humanos, Zona 2, Guatemala, Guatemala

COPIES TO:

Juan José Rodil Peralta
Unión del Centro Nacional
12 Calle, 2-45
Zona 1, Guatemala
Guatemala

Diario El Gráfico
14 Avenida 4-33
Zona 1, Guatemala
Guatemala

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala in your country.

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