

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/11/97

12 March 1997

Further information on UA 64/97 (AMR 41/10/97, 10 March 1997) - Fear of torture and new concern - Prisoners of conscience / Medical concern

MEXICO Gerónimo Hernández López (note correct spelling)

Gonzalo Rosas Morales

Ramón Parceró Martínez (note full name)

Francisco González Gutiérrez (note correct name)

Fidel Vera

Carlos Cruz

Pascual Álvaro

Amnesty International is appalled by further reports confirming human rights violations against members of the Catholic Church and indigenous leaders in the state of Chiapas.

After their arrest on 8 March 1997, Gerónimo Hernández López and Gonzalo Rosas Morales, both Jesuit priests, and Mayan Indian leaders, Ramón Parceró Martínez and Francisco González Gutiérrez were transferred to the *Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado* (PGJE), State Attorney General's Office, in the state capital, Tuxtla Gutiérrez. They were reportedly tortured and questioned while held *incommunicado* for at least 20 hours. Members of the NGO community and their legal representatives went to the PGJE demanding information but were repeatedly told that the prisoners were not being held there. The four were then transferred to a prison in Cerro Hueco, near Tuxtla Gutiérrez where they are still held.

It is feared that medical attention is being denied to the men. Francisco González Gutiérrez suffered severe injuries as a result of torture and is in urgent need of medical treatment. There is no indication that any of the detainees has been visited by a doctor.

Amnesty International considers the four men to be prisoners of conscience, who have been arrested and tortured by the security forces solely because of their activities as human rights defenders.

The organization fears that these developments may result in further human rights violations in the context of the continuing stalemate over peace talks in Chiapas in March 1996.

Fidel Vera, Carlos Cruz and Pascual Álvaro, who were believed to have been arrested during the police operation on 8 March, were in fact in hiding in fear for their safety and have now safely returned to their homes.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or in your own language:

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Gerónimo Hernández López, Gonzalo Rosas Morales, Ramón Parceró Martínez and Francisco González Gutiérrez;
- urging the government to grant the detainees immediate and regular access to an independent doctor and to provide any necessary medical treatment;
- expressing alarm at the rapid deterioration in the human rights situation in Chiapas, and calling on the government to adopt urgent and effective measures, according to its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and

Political Rights and the UN Convention Against Torture, to halt the pattern of human rights violations and the impunity which benefits the perpetrators.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

Lic. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León

Presidente de la República

Palacio Nacional, 06067 México D.F., MEXICO

Telegrams: Presidente Zedillo, México D.F., México

Telexes: 170937 sppnme; 1774468 sppnme

Faxes: + 52 5 271 1764, or 515 1794 or 542 1648 (voice line: ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

COPIES TO:

human rights organization

Centro de DD.HH. Miguel Agustín Pro-Juárez (PRODH)

Puebla No 153, Col Roma

06700 México DF, México

Faxes: + 52 5 208 7547

and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 April 1997.