

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/47/97

UA 185/97

Fear for safety

23 June 1997

MEXICO Víctor Manuel Quintana Silveyra, congressional deputy and human rights defender and members of his family

At 4am on 18 June 1997, Víctor Manuel Quintana Silveyra, a deputy in the federal congress for the state of Chihuahua, was abducted in Mexico City by four unidentified men, allegedly with links to local authorities. He was reportedly tied up and gagged and held for eight hours, during which time he was beaten and threatened. His abductors also threatened to harm members of his family.

The abduction took place near the building where Víctor Manuel Quintana Silveyra lives. According to reports the four men forced him into a taxi and he was driven round the city for some time before being taken to a hotel room. He was repeatedly beaten. The abductors told him they knew who he was, where he lived, the location of his house in Chihuahua and about his children. Their last words on leaving him in the hotel room were: "Ya te conocemos" ("We know who you are").

Víctor Manuel Quintana Silveyra is a congressional deputy for the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática*, PRD, Party of the Democratic Revolution, an opposition party. He is also president of the non-governmental human rights organization, *Equipo Pueblo*, and advisor to the *Frente Democrático Campesino de Chihuahua* Democratic Peasant Front of Chihuahua, a peasant farmer's organization.

Amnesty International believes that Víctor Manuel Quintana Silveyra is being targeted because of his political activities and his work in defence of human rights. The organization fears that he and his family may face further serious human rights violations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The approach of congressional elections in July 1997 has meant an increase in tension throughout Mexico. Members of the PRD, as well as social and human rights activists, have increasingly been subjected to threats, arrest and attacks by the security forces and paramilitary groups.

On 13 June 1997 the offices of *Equipo Pueblo* were broken into by persons unknown. The offices were vandalized and computer equipment containing files with human rights information was stolen.

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

- condemning the abduction of Víctor Manuel Quintana Silveyra and the threats made against him and his family;
- calling on the authorities to guarantee his and his family's safety;
- calling for a prompt and full investigation into the abduction in order to bring those responsible to justice; asking to be kept informed of any findings;
- expressing deep alarm about the continued human rights violations against members of the PRD and human rights activists in Mexico;
- asking what steps are being taken to stop such incidents and to end the impunity currently enjoyed by most perpetrators.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior:

Lic. Emilio Chuayffet Chemor
Secretario de Gobernación
Secretaría de Gobernación

Bucarelli 99, 1er piso, Col Juárez, 06699 México DF, MEXICO

Faxes: + 52 5 546 5350 / +52 5 535 99 52

Telegrams: Secretario Gobernación, Mexico, Mexico

Salutation: Sr. Secretario / Dear Minister

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Jorge Madrazo Cuéllar
Procurador General de la República
Procuraduría General de la República
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Col. Guerrero

06300 México D.F., MEXICO

Telegrams: Procurador Madrazo, México D.F., México

Faxes: +52 5 626 4419

Salutation: Sr. Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

President of the Human Rights Commission of the Federal District.

Dr. Luis de la Barra Solórzano

Presidente

Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal

Chapultepec 49,

Col. Centro, México D.F. MEXICO

Telegrams: Dr. De la Barra, Comisión de Derechos Humanos del D.F.

Fax: +52 5 578 2578

Salutation: Sr. Presidente de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos del D.F./ Dear Sir

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Human Rights Organization

Equipo Pueblo

Francisco Field

Jurado No. 51, Col Independencia

C.P. 03630, México D.F. MEXICO

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 2 August 1997.