

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 181/91 Torture/"Disappearance"

29 May 1991

PERU: Manuel MENESES SOTACURO, aged 17  
and one other, name unknown

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Amnesty International is concerned about the reported torture and "disappearance" of 17-year-old Manuel Meneses Sotacuro and of an unidentified person (male), after their detention by members of the Guardia de Seguridad (Security police).

According to reports, in the early morning of 20 May 1991, Manuel Meneses and another unidentified young man whose name is not known to Amnesty International, were outside the building of a Protestant organization in Huancayo, Junín department, waiting for it to open. They were reportedly detained by members of the Guardia de Seguridad and taken to the Millotingo police station in the district of Tambo, Huancayo province. The detentions were witnessed by employees of a nearby radio station, who immediately reported the incident to leaders of the Protestant Church in the area.

The reports further indicate that on the same day, hooded members of the Guardia de Seguridad took Manuel Meneses to the house where he was lodging and asked him where he had hidden a gun. He was then reportedly taken away in a car escorted by a police van. A witness in the house later stated that Manuel Meneses showed clear signs of having been tortured.

The detentions were immediately reported to the Provincial Attorney. The latter requested information on the detainees at the headquarters of the Guardia de Seguridad and at the "9 de Diciembre" army base. In both the police and army bases, the authorities refused to acknowledge the detentions.

There are serious fears for the physical safety of Manuel Meneses and of the unidentified young man.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For the last eight years Amnesty International has received numerous reports of unacknowledged detentions from Peru, some of which have led to "disappearances". Most of them have occurred in rural areas and have been carried out by uniformed members of the security forces. Many of those detained "disappear" indefinitely; others are released after days or weeks in secret custody, during which time they may be subjected to torture. Sometimes their detention is acknowledged after prolonged secret detention and interrogation.

In these cases, detentions are only acknowledged to have occurred as of the date they are transferred from military to police custody, when public prosecutors are informed of them. The armed forces as a rule never acknowledge having held prisoners prior to their transfer to the competent authority. This is a major contributing factor to the continuing practice of torture and "disappearance".

Human rights violations take place in a context of increasingly violent activities by armed opposition groups, especially "Sendero Luminoso", which has claimed responsibility for hundreds of execution-style killings of government officials, leaders of political parties and members of peasant communities believed to have cooperated with the armed forces.

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

- expressing concern about the reported "*disappearance*" after detention of Manuel Meneses Sotacuro, aged 17, and of an unidentified young man;
- further expressing concern that Manuel Meneses apparently had signs of torture when seen by a witness after his arrest;
- asking that their detention be acknowledged and that their whereabouts be immediately made known;
- urging that, while in detention, they be humanely treated and given immediate access to a lawyer, a doctor and their relatives;
- further urging that they be promptly brought before a competent authority and charged, or immediately released.

## APPEALS TO:

Presidente Alberto Fujimori  
 Presidente de la República  
 Palacio de Gobierno  
 Plaza de Armas  
 Lima 1, Perú  
 Telegrams: Presidente Fujimori, Lima, Peru  
 Telexes: 20167 PE PALACIO; 20331 PE SEC PRE  
 Faxes: + 51 14 33 7020

General EP Jorge Torres Aciego  
 Ministro de Defensa  
 Ministerio de Defensa  
 Avenida Boulevard  
 Monterrico  
 Lima 33, Perú  
 Telegrams: Ministro Defensa Torres, Lima, Peru  
 Telexes: 25438 PE COMGREGJ  
 Faxes: + 51 14 33 4470

General EP Victor Malca Villanueva  
 Ministro del Interior  
 Ministerio del Interior  
 Plaza 30 de Agosto 150  
 San Isidro, Urb Corpac  
 Lima 27, Perú  
 Telegrams: Ministro Interior Alvarado, Lima, Peru  
 Telexes: 21133 PE OCMI  
 Faxes: + 51 14 41 5128

## COPIES TO:

Señores  
 CEAPAZ (Human Rights Organization)  
 Apartado 11-0764  
 Lima 11  
 PERU

and to diplomatic representatives of Peru in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 July 1991.