

PUBLIC

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To: Health professionals
From: Medical Office / South America Subregional Team
Date: 30 September 1999

Further Information on

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

Three wheelchair-bound prisoners

PERU

[See AI Index: AMR 46/21/98, 27 November 1998, and AI Index: AMR 46/14/98; 12 August 1998]

Theme: lack of adequate medical care / ill-treatment in prison

Summary

Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón, Manuel Mendoza Chiara and Juan Francisco Tulich Morales, who were the subject of medical actions in August and November 1998, continue to be detained in Socabaya prison in Arequipa, where they still do not appear to be receiving the medical care that they require.

On 22 March 1999, the family of Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón submitted a statement by a neurosurgeon from the hospital in Arequipa to Peru's Minister of Justice which recommended that Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón (who suffers from a slipped disk in the lumbar area which has caused him to be paralysed in the lower limbs) undergo Magnetic Resonance Imaging [MRI] and other specialist examinations that can only be carried out in Peru's capital, Lima. According to the family of Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón, his transfer to Lima has also been endorsed by the prison doctor of Socabaya prison, and has been approved by the director of Socabaya prison and the local branch of the Instituto Nacional Penitenciario (INPE, National Institute for Prisons). However, approval from the INPE headquarters in Lima - which are under the direction of the Minister of Justice - is still outstanding, and without it the transfer cannot take place. To date, the family has not received a reply from the Justice Ministry.

Amnesty International has not received any new information on Manuel Mendoza Chiara (who has been diagnosed as having chronic radiculomyelopathy) and Juan Francisco Tulich Morales (who suffers from spinal cord compression), and remains concerned about their well-being. All three men are serving life sentences for terrorism-related offences and were transferred from the high-security prison of Yanamayo to Socabaya prison in Arequipa in the third quarter of 1998.

Recommended Actions

Appeals are requested from members of the network who have already worked on the earlier actions issued in August and November 1998:

- referring to your earlier letters
- expressing concern that Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón, Manuel Mendoza Chiara and Juan Francisco Tulich Morales remain in need of specialist medical care
- noting that a medical report was submitted to Peru's Justice Ministry in March 1999, recommending that Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón undergo specialist medical examinations that can only be carried out in Lima
- noting that, according to information received from Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón's family, the doctor of Socabaya prison supports this recommendation, and that the transfer has been approved by the director of Socabaya prison and the local branch of the Instituto Nacional Penitenciario [INPE]
- calling on the INPE headquarters in Lima to approve the transfer of Florencio Arturo Varillas Tizón if the tests that he requires cannot be carried out in Arequipa
- calling on the authorities to also authorize the transfer of Manuel Mendoza Chiara and Juan Francisco Tulich Morales to another prison or an appropriate hospital if the medical tests and treatment they may need are not available to them in Arequipa

If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of dispatch of your letter, please send a follow-up letter seeking a response. Please check with the medical team if you are sending appeals after 30 November 1999, and send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat (att: medical team).

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COPIES TO:

Vicaría de la Solidaridad de Julí
Arequipa 342
Piso 5
Puno, Peru

and to diplomatic representatives of Peru
accredited to your country.