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HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA AND THE 55th UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

“I was taken into a separate room and three police officers came in and started beating me. Then a fourth officer came in and he started beating me too. I screamed very loudly throughout the ordeal -- but everyone in the station ignored it. I was kept in a cell overnight and, the next day, I was sent to the hospital. I had two black eyes and contusions all over my body. The police claimed that I had slipped and hit myself on the corner of a desk. ... I can't feel like I'm safe on the streets anymore.” Shirley Alejos, US citizen of Puerto Rican origin. Chicago.

Amnesty International asked Shirley Alejos if she would be willing to tell her story abroad: “I will go anywhere. I will tell my story to as many people as needed”. On 7th April, she will tell her story to representatives attending the 55th UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, at a lunchtime meeting focusing on human rights violations in the USA, ranging from police brutality to the use of the death penalty and the detention of asylum seekers.

SPECIAL LUNCHTIME MEETING (open to the press) chaired by Pierre Sané Secretary General, Amnesty International

Date : Wednesday 7 April 1999

Time: 1-3 pm

Place: Room No.XXIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva

The meeting will concentrate on the USA's human rights record vis-à-vis the country's obligations under international human rights law.

Panellists

Pierre Sané, Amnesty International - Secretary General

Reed Brody, Human Rights Watch - Advocacy Director

Shirley Alejos, police brutality victim

Wendy Young, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

Participants

Steve Hawkins, death penalty lawyer and Executive Director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

Van Jones, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights - Executive Director

All panellists and participants will be available for interviews. ENDS.../

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