

URGENT ACTION

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE OF FOUR YOUNG MEN

The whereabouts of four young men detained in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua state by municipal police, is unknown. There is grave concern for their safety and that of witnesses, relatives and human rights defenders working on the case who may be at risk of threats or intimidation.

According to several eyewitnesses, on 26 March **Juan Carlos Chavira**, 28, **Dante Castillo**, 25, **Raúl Navarro**, 29, and **Félix Vizcarra**, 22, were stopped as they drove through Pradera de los Oasis neighbourhood of Ciudad Juárez and arrested by members of the Delta Unit of the municipal police. Witnesses identified patrol vehicles belonging to the elite police group apparently responsible for the personal security of a newly appointed Head of Public Security in the city. The four men's vehicle was apparently driven off by a police officer and was later found abandoned. According to police officials, there is no record of the four men's detention and the implicated officers have denied involvement in their enforced disappearance.

The families of the men have expressed concern for their own safety as they have pressed the authorities to investigate. Witnesses who have testified before the State Prosecutor's Office to identify police involved may also face reprisals. More than 80 municipal police officers appeared at the State Prosecutor's Office in an apparent attempt to confuse and delay the identification process. The relatives have also filed a complaint with the Chihuahua State Human Rights Commission, as well as an *amparo* (habeas corpus). Amnesty International is also concerned for the safety of the representative of the State Human Rights Commission in Ciudad Juárez, Gustavo de la Rosa, who has been outspoken in pressing for a full investigation. Relatives of the men have pressed the authorities for information on their loved ones and have filed complaints with the State Attorney General's Office and the State Human Rights Commission.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urge the authorities to provide information on the whereabouts of Juan Carlos Chavira, Dante Castillo, Raúl Navarro and Félix Vizcarra, for the men to be brought before a court and charged with recognised criminal offences or released;
- Call on the authorities to ensure the safety of Juan Carlos Chavira, Dante Castillo, Raúl Navarro and Félix Vizcarra and for them to be given access to family, legal advice and medical attention;
- Call for a full, prompt, impartial and exhaustive investigation into their enforced disappearance by municipal police officers on 26 March, for a report on the findings to be made public and for all those responsible to be held to account;
- Call for witnesses, relatives and human rights defenders working on the case to receive protection in line with their wishes and ensure that all agencies fully cooperate with investigations and measures to locate the four men.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 13 MAY 2011 TO:

Governor of Chihuahua State

Lic. César Duarte Jaquez
Gobernador del Estado de Chihuahua,
Palacio del Gobierno, 1er piso, C.
Aldama #901, Col. Centro,
Chihuahua, Estado del Chihuahua, C.P.
31000, Mexico
Fax: +52 614 429 3300 (ext. 11066)

Salutation: Dear Governor

Mayor of Ciudad Juárez

Ing. Héctor Murgía Lardizábal
Presidente Municipal de Ciudad Juárez
Unidad Administrativa Benito Juárez.
Primer piso, ala norte.
Av. Francisco Villa # 950 Norte, Cd.
Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico
Email: presidente@juarez.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Mayor

Minister of the Interior

Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora
Secretario, Sec. Del Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez,
Delegación Cuauhtémoc,
México D.F., C.P. 06600
Fax: +52 55 30032900 (a voice will
ask for the extension: dial 32356)

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2007, violence linked to organized crime has spiralled in Mexico. The government attributes more than 34,000 killings during this period to organized crime. In 2010 there were more than 3,000 killings in Ciudad Juárez, one of the worst affected cities. President Calderón's administration has attempted to combat the drug cartels by deploying thousands of federal police and over 50,000 military personnel in the worst affected areas, particularly Ciudad Juárez, as well as restructuring state and municipal police forces. Active or retired military officials hold key positions in civilian public security functions in many parts of the country. Despite repeated reports of serious human rights violations, such as unlawful killings, enforced disappearances and torture by different police and military forces, investigations are rare and perpetrators seldom held to account.

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