

PERUMargarita Patiño Rey Sánchez (f)

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Margarita Patiño Rey Sánchez. She has been receiving anonymous death threats after publicly naming the military officers who allegedly killed her husband.

Anonymous phone calls have been made to Margarita Patiño Rey Sánchez's home since 13 April 2002, the day after she testified at the public hearing of the recently formed Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The callers have threatened to kill her. In the last few days, her two dogs have reportedly been poisoned in what appears to be a blatant act of intimidation.

Margarita Patiño Rey Sánchez is the wife of Hugo Bustíos Saavedra, a journalist allegedly killed by members of the security forces in 1989.

He was an independent journalist who reported on human rights violations committed by security forces in the late 1980s, as well as on the crimes committed by the armed opposition groups in the region. According to reports, he was killed by a military patrol on his way to investigate an army killing in Huanta province.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been created, after 20 years of grave human rights violations committed by the security forces in Peru, as well as grave human rights abuses committed by the armed opposition group during an armed conflict which started in the early 1980s. The aim of the Commission is to establish the circumstances and facts surrounding abuses and human rights violations committed between May 1980 and November 2000. Another aim is to identify those responsible. On 8 April 2002, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had its first public hearing in the city of Ayacucho. A second public hearing took place on 12 April in the town of Huanta, and more public hearings are scheduled in the next weeks.

Amnesty International has welcomed the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The organization's Secretary General regretted not having been able to attend these hearings and stated in a news release: "Amnesty International considers the work of the Commission to be of the utmost importance. Peruvian society has a responsibility to the thousands of victims of past human rights violations and their relatives. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission provides the possibility for a more just country where the human rights of all are fully respected" (see AMR 46/008/2002, 8 April 2002)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Marganita Patiño Rey Sanchez, who has received anonymous death threats since she testified before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on 12 April 2002 in the town of Huanta;
- urging that a full, independent and impartial investigation is carried out into these allegations and that those found responsible are brought to justice;
- requesting that the authorities take the necessary steps to protect Marganita Patiño Rey Sánchez and her family.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior
Sr. Fernando Rospigliosi
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Plaza 30 de agosto s/n
San Isidro
Lima 27, Peru

Telegram: Interior Minister, Lima, Peru

Fax: + 511 224 2413 (if someone answers say "me da tono de fax por favor")

Salutation: Dear Minister/Sr. Ministro

COPIES TO:

President of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Sr. Salomon Lerner Corder
Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación
Av. Salaverry 2802
San Isidro
Lima 27, Peru

Human Rights Organization
COMISEDH
Av. Horacio Urteaga 704
Jesús María
Apdo Postal 11-0237
Lima, Peru

and to diplomatic representatives of Peru accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 May 2002.