

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/10/98

UA 53/98

Possible "disappearance"

17 February 1998

MEXICO Aquiles Magaña García - Union leader

Aquiles Magaña García has not been seen since 13 February 1998, when he was illegally arrested, allegedly by members of the police in the city of Villahermosa, Tabasco State. According to his wife, María de los Angeles Alvarez, he was forced into a vehicle by a group of armed men. She subsequently reported that she recognized both the vehicle and one of the men responsible for carrying out the illegal arrest, while she was making enquiries as to his whereabouts at the local office of the *Procuraduría General de la República* (PGR), Attorney General's Office.

Aquiles Magaña García is leader of the *Frente Amplio de Lucha Democrática* (FALD), Broad Front for Democratic Struggle, a road sweepers' union in Tabasco.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Towards the end of 1996, road sweepers in Tabasco carried out protests and a hunger strike in Mexico City demanding better working conditions. On 19 January 1997, the three people on hunger strike were beaten and dragged away by riot police. They were later discovered to have been left at a hospital in Mexico City. Seven other road sweepers, including Aquiles Magaña García, who were accompanying the hunger strikers, were beaten up by the same members of the police. Aquiles Magaña García has also been subjected to a smear campaign in the local press, including unfounded accusations of embezzlement.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in or your own language:

- calling for the whereabouts of Aquiles Magaña García to be made known immediately to his family;
- seeking assurances that if Aquiles Magaña García is being held in detention that his physical safety be guaranteed;
- calling for a prompt and thorough investigation into the reported illegal detention of Aquiles Magaña García and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- requesting to be kept informed of any judicial proceedings.

APPEALS TO:

1) Governor of Tabasco State

Roberto Madrazo Pintado
Gobernador del Estado de Tabasco
Palacio de Gobierno
Villahermosa, Tabasco, MEXICO

Telegrams: Gobernador, Tabasco, México

Faxes: + 52 93 14 3003

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador/Dear Governor

2) Procurador of Tabasco State

Patricia Pedrero y Duarte
Procuradora del Estado de Tabasco
Procuraduría General de Justicia
Paseo Usumacinta s/n, esquina Ayuntamiento
Villahermosa, Tabasco, MEXICO

Telegrams: Procuradora, Tabasco, México

Faxes: + 52 93 15 5221

Salutation: Sra. Procuradora/Dear Attorney

COPIES TO:

Human rights organisation

FEDEFAM

Edificio CHIAPAS

Entrada B Depto. 307

Unidad Tlatelolco

06900 México D.F., MEXICO

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Sr. Editor

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06050 México D.F., MEXICO

and to diplomatic representatives of MEXICO accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 March 1998.