

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 25/42/97

24 November 1997

Further information on EXTRA 139/97 (AMR 25/37/97, 17 October 1997) and follow-up (AMR 25/38/97, 21 October and AMR 25/39/97, 30 October) - Prisoners of Conscience /Possible POCs / Legal Concern and new concern: Hunger Strike

CUBADaulla CARPIO MATA (f)

Roxanna Alina CARPIO MATA (f), sister of above

    María Felicia MATA MACHADO (f), 54, mother of the two above

    Ileana PEÑALVER DUQUE (f)

    Vicente GARCIA RAMOS (m)

    Lilián MENESES MARTINEZ (f)

Ivan LEMA ROMERO (m)

    José Antonio ALVARADO ALMEIDA (m)

    Jose Miguel LLERA MARTINEZ (m)

    Danilo SANTOS MENDEZ (m)

    Arélis FLEITES MENDEZ, all members of the unofficial

*Partido Pro Derechos Humanos en Cuba (PPDHC), Party for Human*

*Rights in Cuba*

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On 22 October 1997, eight PPDHC members were sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment or "correctional work" for "associating with others to commit a crime", and "disobedience" after going on hunger strike, in protest at the arrest of Daulla Carpio Mata, another PPDHC member. Amnesty International is calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

The sentence against the eight was ratified on appeal and they are all reported to be continuing their fast in protest at the charges against Daulla Carpio Mata and themselves. There are serious concerns for the health of the eight, one of whom has reportedly had a heart attack. Three of them - Roxanna Alina Carpio Mata, Iván Lema Romero and José Miguel Llera Martínez - have remained in prison since their arrest on 14 October. The other five - Danilo Santos Méndez, Vicente García Ramos, José Antonio Alvaro Almeida, Lilián Meneses Martínez and Ileana Peñalver Duque, who were sentenced to "correctional work" - are due to report on 24 November to different work camps [*granjas*].

At least three of the eight are currently in Villa Clara Provincial Hospital suffering from the effects of their hunger strike: José Antonio Alvarado Almeida, aged 33, reportedly suffered a heart attack on 22 November and is in intensive care; Ileana Peñalver Duque is reportedly under observation; and Roxanna Carpio Mata, who was transferred to hospital from Guamajal Prison on 20 November, is reportedly being fed intravenously after it was discovered upon her transfer to hospital that she is pregnant. It is not clear whether she has given up her hunger strike on learning that she was pregnant.

The eight went on hunger strike at the home of one of them in Santa Clara in protest at the arrest of PPDHC provincial delegate Daulla Carpio Mata on 9 October. It is believed that the authorities saw this as particularly provocative because that week many visitors, including foreign journalists, were arriving in the city for the funeral of revolutionary leader Ernesto "Che" Guevara, whose remains had recently been returned from Bolivia. Daulla Carpio Mata was later sentenced on 29 October to 16 months' "correctional work with internment" for "assault", "*atentado*", on the grounds that she verbally attacked a prison doctor during the trial of another PPDHC member in July. She is at present at home awaiting the outcome of her appeal. This was due to take place on 21 November at Villa Clara People's Provincial Court [*Tribunal Popular*].

*Provincial de Villa Clara*] but was reportedly postponed because the prosecution witness in the case was not in a fit state to testify. Amnesty International has received reports that the prosecution witness may have been pressurised into testifying at the original trial by State Security.

Amnesty International believes that the charges on which the hunger strikers have been convicted have been brought solely on account of their peaceful political activities. The organization is therefore urging that the charges against them be dropped and that they be released immediately and unconditionally on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience. It is also investigating the background to the charge brought against Daula Carpio Mata. It believes that it may have been fabricated in order to discredit her and the PPDHC and that if imprisoned in such circumstances, she may also be a prisoner of conscience.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish, otherwise English or in your own language:**

- urging that the charges against Roxanna Carpio Mata, Ileana Peñalver Duque, Vicente García Ramos, Lilian Meneses Martínez, Iván Lema Romero, José Antonio Alvarado Almeida, José Miguel Llera Benítez and Danilo Santos Méndez be immediately dropped and those in detention released unconditionally on the grounds that they have been targeted solely because of their peaceful political activities;
- requesting that those in custody who are on hunger strike and who request medical attention be granted immediate access to all necessary treatment to ensure their wellbeing and that Roxanna Carpio Mata, who has recently been found to be pregnant, be provided with pre-natal advice;
- expressing concern at reports that State Security may have been exerting pressure on a prosecution witness to testify against Daula Carpio Mata and that, if imprisoned, the latter may also be a prisoner of conscience.

**APPEALS TO: (This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 25 per Section.)**

1) Minister of the Interior

General Abelardo Colomé Ibarra  
 Ministro del Interior  
 Ministerio del Interior  
 Plaza de la Revolución, La Habana, Cuba  
**Faxes: + 53 7 33 5261 (attn: Ministro del Interior)**  
**Telegrams: Ministro Interior, Havana, Cuba**  
**Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister**

2) Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sr Roberto Robaina González  
 Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores  
 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
 Calzada No. 360, Vedado, La Habana, Cuba  
**Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores, Havana, Cuba**  
**Telexes: 511122 / 511464 / 512950**  
**Faxes: +53 7 333085 / +53 7 333460**  
**Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister**

3) Attorney-General

Dr Juan Escalona Reguera  
 Fiscal General de la República  
 Fiscalía General de la República

San Rafael 3, La Habana, Cuba

**Telegrams: Fiscal General, Havana, Cuba**

**Telexes: 511456 fisge**

**Salutation: Sr Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General**

**COPIES TO:**

Cuban Journalists Union (official body)

*Unión de Periodistas de Cuba*

Calle 23 No. 452, Apartado 6646

Vedado, Havana, Cuba

Editor of Granma (daily newspaper)

Sr Jacinto Granda de Laserna

Granma, Apdo 6260, La Habana, Cuba

and to diplomatic representatives of Cuba accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 December 1997.