

EXTERNAL

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UA 121/97

Arbitrary detention / Fear of torture

29 April 1997

PERU

Susana ROQUE CASTRO (f), aged 34

Rosa CÁRDENAS R. (f), aged 46

The two women named above, reported to have been arbitrarily detained on the night of 25 April 1997, are feared to be at risk of torture while in the custody of the DINCOTE, the anti-terrorism branch of the *Policía Nacional del Perú*, PNP, National Police of Peru.

Susana Roque Castro and Rosa Cárdenas R. were detained by members of the PNP attached to the *Delegación Policial de Condevilla*, Condevilla Police Station, in San Martín de Porres, a district of Lima, the capital. Both women were transferred in the early hours of 26 April to the headquarters of the DINCOTE in Lima. A human rights lawyer who went to the DINCOTE was told that Susana Roque and Rosa Cárdenas had been detained because they answered to a description of two women wanted on suspicion of "terrorism".

Susana Roque and Rosa Cárdenas were arrested after leaving the home of the family of Rolly Rojas, one of the 14 members of the *Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru*, MRTA, Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, killed by members of the Peruvian security forces when they stormed the residence of the Japanese Ambassador in Lima on 22 April and rescued 71 of the 72 hostages held there by the MRTA (see Amnesty International News Service 72/97 and 74/97 of 23 and 24 April respectively). Susana Roque and Rosa Cárdenas had gone to the Rojas' home to offer their condolences to the family following the killing of Rolly Rojas.

Susana Roque's and Rosa Cárdenas' links to the MRTA are reported to be exclusively confined to being the sister and wife respectively of two MRTA prisoners currently serving their sentences for the terrorism-related crime of treason (*traición a la Patria*) in the Penal de Máxima Seguridad de Yanamayo, Yanamayo Maximum Security Prison, near the city of Puno.

Amnesty International fears for the safety of Susana Roque and Rosa Cárdenas in detention as the organization believes torture and ill-treatment of detainees accused of "terrorism" to be commonplace in Peru.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 17 December 1996, the MRTA took hostage some 700 guests attending a function at the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima. The vast majority of the hostages were released by the MRTA during the initial weeks of the hostage crisis. However, the MRTA kept captive 72 hostages. They included Peruvian government officials, the Ambassadors of Bolivia and Japan, and Japanese diplomats and businessmen. Despite protracted negotiations to find a peaceful solution to the crisis, on 22 April a special unit attached to the Peruvian armed forces stormed the residence. One hostage, two members of the special unit, and 14 MRTA hostage-takers were killed during the operation.

Amnesty International has expressed concern about the widespread use of torture by the Peruvian security forces during counter-insurgency operations throughout the past 17 years. In November 1994 the United Nations (UN) Committee against Torture also expressed its concern to the Government of Peru about the numerous cases of torture it received. In March 1997 the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture was reported to have made declarations before journalists identifying Peru

as one amongst 29 countries throughout the world where the use of torture by the security forces appeared to be a serious problem.

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

- expressing concern at the reported arbitrary detention by the police of Susan Roque Castro and Rosa Cárdenas R., on 25 April, and subsequent transfer to the DINCOTE headquarters on 26 April;
- urging the authorities to charge the two women with recognized criminal offences or otherwise release them immediately;
- urging the authorities to take all the necessary steps to guarantee their physical and psychological safety.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

General César Saucedo Sánchez

Ministro del Interior

Ministerio del Interior

Plaza 30 de Agosto 150

San Isidro, Urb. Córpac, Lima 27, PERU

Fax: + 511 2242407 (if voice, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Telegrams: Ministro del Interior, Lima, Peru

Salutation: Sr Ministro / Dear Minister

Director General of the PNP

General PNP Fernando Dianderas

Ministerio del Interior

Plaza 30 de Agosto 150

San Isidro, Urb. Córpac, Lima 27, PERU

Fax: + 511 2242407 (if voice, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Telegrams: General PNP, Lima, Peru

Salutation: Estimado General / Dear General

COPIES TO:

Human rights organization

APRODEH, Jr. Pachacutec 980

Jesús María, Lima 11, Perú

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 16 June 1997.