

EXTERNAL

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UA 127/97

Fear of ill-treatment

1 May 1997

**PERU Prisoners belonging to the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaro (MRTA),  
Túpac Amaro Revolutionary Movement**

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Amnesty International is concerned that MRTA prisoners are being held in incommunicado detention and are therefore at risk of ill-treatment.

On 24 April 1997, in the wake of the resolution of the MRTA hostage crisis, Amnesty International appealed to the authorities to restore access to the MRTA prisoners. However, on 28 April, President Alberto Fujimori stated publicly that the visits to MRTA prisoners would remain suspended for the time being "for security reasons".

Access to MRTA prisoners, suspended during the hostage crisis, includes visits by family members, nuns and priests, lawyers and representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The suspension of independent visits effectively places all MRTA prisoners in a condition of incommunicado detention. By continuing to deny such visits, Amnesty International believes that Peru is contravening the *UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment* which was adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly in 1988.

The Body of Principles states that prisoners cannot be prohibited access to the outside world, in particular access to family and lawyers, except for a matter of days in exceptional circumstances. Since MRTA members have been denied access to any independent visits since mid-January 1997, they have in effect been in incommunicado detention for over three months.

**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 (see Amnesty International News Service 72/97 and 74/97, 23 and 24 April respectively.)

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

- expressing concern that MRTA prisoners continue to be denied independent visits of any kind, thereby placing them at risk of ill-treatment;
- urging the authorities to reinstate all visits, including by representatives of the ICRC.

**APPEALS TO:**

President  
Presidente Alberto Fujimori  
President de la República del Perú  
Palacio de Gobierno  
Plaza de Armas

2

Lima 1, PERU

**Fax: +511 426 6770**

**Telegrams: Presidente Fujimori, Lima, Perú**

**Salutation: Sr. President / Dear President**

Minister of Justice

Carlos Hermoza Moya

Ministro de Justicia

Ministerio de Justicia

Scipión Llona 350

San Isidro

Lima, PERU

**Fax: + 511 422 2654 / 422 3577**

**Telegrams: Ministro Justicia, Lima, Perú**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Human rights organization

Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos

Jr. Túpac Amaru 2647

Lince,

Lima 14, 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 12 June 1997.