

EXTERNAL

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Fear for safety/Torture

31 July 1997

VENEZUELA Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz
Mirna Josefina de Campos

On July 1997 Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz was arbitrarily detained by the *Policía Técnica Judicial* (PTJ), Judicial Technical Police, outside his home in Los Teques, a suburb of Caracas. He is reportedly being held at the PTJ headquarters in Parque Carabobo, Caracas. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for his safety.

The arrest was made without a warrant by four unidentified armed men. They reportedly informed his wife, Mirna Josefina de Campos, who witnessed and tried to prevent the arrest, that her husband was wanted for murder and that she should go to the PTJ headquarters if she wanted more information.

On 23 July, Mirna de Campos was also arbitrarily detained whilst attending the PTJ headquarters to enquire about her husband. In detention she managed to see her husband who was handcuffed and hanging from the wrists in a cell, crying for help. She was subsequently released later the same day without charge but warned against filing any complaints. Her husband has reportedly been charged with a crime for which he apparently has an alibi, yet he remains in incommunicado detention. The organization fears that he is at significant risk of being subjected to torture and ill-treatment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The practice of torture and ill-treatment by the Venezuelan security forces has been extensively documented by Amnesty International, together with dozens of cases of torture of detainees held in the PTJ headquarters in Parque Carabobo, Caracas. The organization therefore has well-founded fears for the physical safety of Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz. There is also serious concern for the safety of his wife following the intimidation, arbitrary detention and threats she has suffered at the hands of members of the PTJ.

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

- expressing grave concern about the safety of Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz, presently in incommunicado detention in the PTJ headquarters in Parque Carabobo, Caracas, where he was seen in conditions strongly suggesting he was being subjected to torture;
- calling for immediate and effective measures to end any physical harassment against Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz;
- urging that Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz be immediately and unconditionally released, unless lawfully charged with a crime in which case calling for a fair and prompt hearing and urging that he be granted access to an independent medical observer, his lawyer and relatives;
- calling for an immediate investigation into allegations that Luis Alberto Campos Ruíz has suffered torture and ensuring that all those responsible are brought to justice;
- expressing alarm and deep concern at the arbitrary detention, intimidation and threats suffered by Mirna Josefina Martínez de Campos at the PTJ central station in Caracas where she went to enquire after her husband.

APPEALS TO:

General Attorney

Dr. Iván Darío Badell
Fiscal General de la República
Esquina de Manduca a Ferrenquín
Caracas, Venezuela
Telegrams: Fiscal General, Caracas, Venezuela
Fax: + 58 2 564 74 61
Salutation: Sr. Fiscal / Dear Mr. Attorney

Minister of Presidency
Dr. Asdrúbal Aguiar
Secretaría de la Presidencia
Palacio de Miraflores
Caracas, Venezuela
Telegrams: Secretaría de la Presidencia, Caracas, Venezuela
Fax: + 58 2 861 0793
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization
Red de Apoyo por la Justicia y la Paz
Apartado Postal No 17476
Parque Central
Caracas 1015-A
Venezuela
Fax: + 58 2 574 19 49 / 574 8005

and to diplomatic representatives of Venezuela accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 September 1997.