

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 25/36/96

UA 215/96 Health concern / Possible Prisoner of Conscience
/ Legal concern

5 September 1996

CUBACarlos LORES MARTINEZ, university engineering lecturer

Carlos Lores Martínez, who has not been allowed to see a lawyer since his arrest more than four months ago, is reported to be seriously ill in detention. He is said to be suffering from a hernia and to have lost 19 pounds (8-9 kilograms) in weight since arrest. He is currently being held in a punishment cell (it is not known why) at the Department of State Security, *Departamento de Seguridad del Estado*, in Pinar del Río province. He has also reportedly been held with prisoners described as "dangerous" and been moved in the middle of the night from cell to cell. Carlos Lores is believed to be under investigation on a charge of "*propaganda enemiga*", "enemy propaganda".

Although Amnesty International has no further details of the conditions of Carlos Lores' detention, prisoners held in State Security facilities are usually permitted a visit from one relative once a week. However the prisoner is not permitted to discuss his/her case or his/her treatment with the relative and the visit is conducted in the presence of an official.

Carlos Lores was arrested on 3 May 1996 while he was giving a class at the Electronics Faculty of Pinar del Río University. His brother, Silvio Lores Martínez, who is also an engineer, was arrested at the same time but was released on the 12 July without being charged. Both brothers have also been expelled from their jobs at the university.

Amnesty International is concerned about the state of health of Carlos Lores and believes that, if convicted solely of enemy propaganda, he would be a possible prisoner of conscience.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prisoners held in State Security facilities are often held in cells with no natural light and subjected to constant artificial light, causing them to lose all notion of time. They are often taken from their cells at any time of the day or night for interrogation. Former detainees have frequently alleged that they were pressurized to sign false statements and that threats were made against their family members. Access to a lawyer in cases of crimes against state security is not permitted until the investigation period has been completed, often several months after arrest and sometimes only days or hours before the trial hearing.

In recent weeks Amnesty International has received reports that other teachers have been expelled from their jobs and/or from the Communist Party because of their political views.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Carlos Lores is in a very poor state of health;
- urging that he be given any necessary medical attention immediately;
- urging that Carlos Lores Martínez be granted immediate and continuing access to a lawyer of his choice;
- requesting that any charges brought against him in connection with his attempts to peacefully exercise his right to freedom of expression be dropped and that he be released immediately unless charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

1) 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
Faxes: + 53 7 333164
Salutation: Sr Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General

2) Minister of the Interior

General Abelardo Colomé Ibarra
Ministro de Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Plaza de la Revolución
La Habana, Cuba
Telegrams: Ministro Interior, Havana, Cuba
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

3) Department of State Security

Sr. Director
Cuartel General del Departamento de Seguridad del Estado
Pinar del Río, Cuba
Telegrams: Director, Departamento de Seguridad del Estado, Pinar del Río
Salutation: Sr. Director / Dear Sir

COPIES TO:

Minister of Higher Education

Sr. Fernando Vecino Alegret
Ministro de la Educación Superior
Ministerio de la Educación Superior
Calle 23 No. 565 esq. a F
Vedado
La Habana, Cuba

Rector of Pinar del Río University

Sr. Rector
Centro Universitario de
Pinar del Río
Martí 270 esq 27 de Noviembre
Pinar del Río, 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 20 October 1996.