

UA 422/93      Fear of "Disappearance"

1 December 1993

ECUADOR      Clever Leonel MENDOZA  
Pedro Pablo IZURIETA  
Samuel Zacarías FIGUEROA PICO  
Ulbio Zacarías FIGUEROA VILLAMAR  
Saúl Fermín FIGUEROA VILLAMAR  
Pedro Antonio FIGUERA VILLAMAR  
José Gregorio FIGUEROA VILLAMAR  
José Efraín BEDOYA  
Carlos Cedeño MENENDEZ

---

Amnesty International is concerned by the reported "disappearance" of the above nine men, all from or near the town of Manta, province of Manabí.

The nine were reportedly detained by the military in three different operations on 18, 20 and 27 November 1993. The detentions, all of which were witnessed, were carried out by hooded men, heavily armed and dressed in military clothing. The operations were apparently linked to a campaign initiated by the government to control organized crime.

On 18 November, Clever Leonel Mendoza, Pedro Pablo Izurieta and three other unnamed people, were reportedly detained in Jaramijó, a small town some 10 kilometres from Manta. On 20 November the three unidentified men were released on the highway to Guayaquil. They were reported to have been kept blindfolded, with their hands tied, in a tent, possibly inside a military camp. During their detention they claim to have been questioned on the whereabouts of "La Rana", "The Frog", a well-known alleged criminal. The whereabouts of Clever Leonel Mendoza and Pedro Pablo Izurieta remain unknown.

On 20 November in Manta, Samuel Zacarías Figueroa Pico and his four sons, Ulbio Zacarías, Saúl Fermín, Pedro Antonio and José Gregorio Figueroa Villamar, were all taken away from their homes in a military operation conducted by scores of heavily armed and hooded men. The five were taken away in a vehicle that witnesses believe belongs to the navy. The Figueroa family are thought to be friends of Clever Leonardo Mendoza and Pedro Pablo Izurieta.

On 27 November José Efraín Bedoya was taken away from his home in Manta, at about 9 pm. One hour later, Carlos Cedeño Menendez was detained in the Malecón, a parade in Manta. Witnesses claim the detentions were carried out by men similar to those described in the two previous cases.

Relatives of the nine men have approached the police and the military authorities in Manta but have failed to obtain information on their whereabouts. The cases have also been denounced by the relatives to the Police Commander of the Province of Manabí, and to the Minister of Government and Police.

#### BACKGROUND

Common and organized crime is reported to have increased in Ecuador during the past two years. In September 1992, soon after taking over the presidency of the Republic, President Sixto Durán Ballén issued Decree Law 86. The decree outlines in its preamble the circumstances which justify the introduction of special measures to control a level of crime which has given rise to "un grave

*estado de conmoción interna*", "a serious state of internal unrest". The decree, in its first article, makes provision for the armed forces to be deployed throughout the country, as a precautionary measure, for the security of the population and property. In November 1992, the Government initiated special anti-crime raids by the military and police, and which took place in Guayaquil and other main cities.

Amnesty International recognizes the right of the authorities to control crime.

However, the organization has noted the numerous criticisms directed at the government and security forces for having used excessive force during these operations. (See Ecuador: Allegations of Extrajudicial Executions, AMR 28/04/93, April 1993)

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

- expressing concern at the reported "disappearance" of the nine people named above following their detention apparently by members of the armed forces in and around the town of Manta on 18, 20 and 27 November 1993;
- urging that their whereabouts be immediately clarified;
- asking that their detention be recognised and they be promptly brought before a judge and that they either be charged with a recognizable criminal offence, or released;
- urging that while in detention they be humanely treated and given access to a lawyer, doctor and relatives.

**APPEALS TO**

1) President of Ecuador

Sr. Sixto Durán Ballén  
 Presidente de la República del Ecuador  
 Palacio de Gobierno  
 García Moreno 1043  
 Quito, ECUADOR

**Telegrams: Presidente Ballén, Quito, Ecuador**

**Telexes: 22375/22201 prerep ed**

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

2) Minister of Government and Police

Sr. Ministro Marcelo Santos  
 Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía  
 Espejo y Benalcázar  
 Quito, ECUADOR

**Telegrams: Ministro Santos, Quito, Ecuador**

**Telexes: 22354 mingob ed**

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

3) Minister of Defence

General José Gallardo Román  
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional  
 Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
 La Recoleta  
 Quito, ECUADOR

**Telegrams: Ministro Román, Quito, Ecuador**

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

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

(Human rights Organization)

Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos  
Quintiliano Sánchez 143 y Yaguachi, El Dorado  
Quito, ECUADOR

and to diplomatic representatives of Ecuador accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 January 1994.