

UA 37/92 Death Threats

31 January 1992

BRAZIL:	Mothers of "disappeared":	
	Marilene LIMA DE SOUZA	(female)
	Vera Lúcia FLORES	(female)
	Edméia da SILVA EUSEBIO	(female)
	Denise VASCONCELOS	(female)
	Euzilar Joana DA SILVA OLIVEIRA	(female)
	Ednéia SANTOS CRUZ	(female)
	Teresa SOUZA COSTA	(female)

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the above mentioned women who have allegedly received death threats. The women are mothers of some of the 11 people, including six minors, who "disappeared" on 26 July from a farm in Magé, Rio de Janeiro state (see Amnesty International Report 1991).

According to Brazilian press reports, the Intelligence Section of the Military Police has identified the kidnapers as military police officers from the 9th Battalion in Rocha Miranda and detectives from the Cargo Theft Department, Delegacia de Roubos e Furtos de Cargas (DRFC), from the 39 Police Station, Delegacia, of Pavuna. According to reports the police officers raided the farm in search of the 11, some of whom were allegedly involved in drug peddling. There are allegations that the police officers were extorting some of the victims.

On a visit to Brazil in May 1991, Amnesty International representatives asked the State Secretary of Public Security, a well-known human rights lawyer, about the case. He indicated that the case was still under investigation. However although on 15 August 1991 three military police and six detectives were identified by witnesses in an identity parade as being involved in the kidnapping, no one has been brought to justice in connection to the crime. Civil and military police have searched the region around the farm but the whereabouts of the 11 is still unknown.

Mothers of the "disappeared" who have denounced the kidnappings and actively campaigned for an investigation have reportedly received death threats. They are said to be so afraid for their lives that they gather together at night to look after each other. On the evening of 26 January three of the six military police officers alleged to be involved in the kidnapping of the 11 were seen in the shanty town, favela, where the mothers live and are said to have sent a message to the mothers saying that once they find out who [among the mothers] identified them, they will suffer a worst fate than their sons. One of the mothers is reported to have said that she does not believe that the kidnapers of their sons will ever be brought to justice because "justice when imparted to the poor, is only in the form of punishment" ("Para o pobre a Justiça só vem em forma de castigo").

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A report by a State Assembly of Rio de Janeiro Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry to investigate the elimination of children and adolescents published in September 1991 established that most of the killings are carried out by death squads, criminal gangs in many cases made up of off-duty police and military police officers, usually hired by local shopkeepers to "clean up" the area from alleged criminals and petty thieves. According

to the state Secretary of the Civil Police, Secretário de Polícia Civil, quoted in the Brazilian press, 306 children and adolescents were killed in the state of Rio de Janeiro in 1991. Fifty military and civil police officers, policiais civis e militares, were allegedly identified as members of death squads.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/airmail letters;

- requesting that steps be taken to ensure the safety of Marilene Lima de Sousa, Vera Lúcia Flores, Edméia da Silva Eusebio, Denise Vasconcelos, Euzilar Joana da Silva Oliveira, Ednéia Santos Cruz and Teresa Souza Costa;
- requesting that the reported death threats against the "mothers" be investigated;
- requesting that the "disappearance" of 11 people in Magé, Rio de Janeiro, on 26 July 1990 be thoroughly investigated, their whereabouts disclosed and the culprits brought to justice.

page 2 of UA 37/92

APPEALS TO:

1) Minister of Justice

Exmo Sr Jarbas Passarinho
Ministro da Justiça
Ministerio da Justiça
Esplanada dos Ministerios, Bloco 23
70.064 Brasilia, D.F Brazil

Telegrams: Ministro Justicia, Brasilia, Brazil
Telexes: 611003 MNJU BR, 611088 MNJU BR or 612313 MNJU BR
Faxes: + 55 61 321 5145
+ 55 61 224 4357

Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency

2) State Governor

Exmo Sr. Governador do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
Sr Leonel Brizola
Palacio Gunabara
Rua Pinheiro Machado s/n
22.231 Rio de Janeiro, R.J. Brazil

Telegrams: Governador Estado Rio de Janeiro, Roi de Janeiro, Brazil
Telexes: 2131111 GERJ BR; 2123437 SGRJ BR; 2121272 PLG BR
Faxes: + 55 21 285 7490 (via Press Office)
Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency

3) State Secretary of Justice

Sr. Secretario de Justiça do Estado de Rio de Janeiro
Dr Nilo Batista
Rua da Palaçao No. 42, 12 Andar
Centro
20031 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Telegrams: Secretario de Justicia Estado Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Centro de Articulação de
Populações Marginalizadas
Rua da Lapa N 200, Sala 809,
Centro,
Rio de Janeiro,
CEP 20021

Brazil

- and to diplomatic representatives of Brazil in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 March 1992.