

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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*Please bring to the attention of those responsible for work on indigenous peoples and press officers.*

UA 327/92

Threats/Intimidation

21 October 1992

GUATEMALA:

Cristina Par, aged 17

Matea Par, aged 16

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Amnesty International is concerned at the reported attack by three unidentified people on two teenagers, Cristina and Matea Par, belonging to the Kakchikel indigenous ethnic group, who are members of the Coordinadora Maya Majawil Q'Ij (Maya Coordination "the new dawn"), an indigenous umbrella organization formed in October 1990.

The teenagers come from the village of Xaquijá, Sololá department, and were attacked close to the offices of Majawil Q'Ij in Guatemala City on 19 October 1992. The attack is reportedly linked to their participation in the celebrations following the announcement on 16 October 1992 that Guatemalan indigenous leader Rigoberta Menchú had won the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize.

According to information received by Amnesty International, at approximately 9am on 19 October 1992, Cristina and Matea Par had just left the offices of Majawil Q'Ij when one man and two women wearing western-style clothes approached them. After admiring the two teenager's indigenous clothes, the three assailants grabbed them by the hair and dragged them through the streets. The assailants were armed - the man carried a knife and the women had hand guns. They told Cristina and Matea Par that they had seen them at the march held on 17 October 1992 to celebrate the award to Rigoberta Menchú. The assailants then began to beat the teenagers and removed their clothes, saying that their indigenous dress and shoes demonstrated that they were guerrillas. The naked teenagers managed to escape and were helped by a witness to the incident, who gave them clothes to wear. The teenagers also reported that their assailants had threatened to kill them.

Amnesty International is concerned that, from the manner in which the attack was carried out, members of the security forces or those working with them may have been responsible.

Amnesty International has documented many similar cases where armed men in plain clothes carry out acts of violence, which are made to look like common crimes, against people considered as political opponents of the government. In many occasions, the authorities have linked Rigoberta Menchú and other indigenous leaders with the armed opposition.

Amnesty International is further concerned for the security of all those associated with Rigoberta Menchú, the winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, particularly other leaders and members of indigenous groups.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

President Jorge Serrano Elías came to power in January 1991. During his presidential campaign he had pledged to ensure protection of human rights. However, Amnesty International remains seriously concerned at continuing human rights violations in Guatemala, including extrajudicial executions, death threats, torture and "disappearances". Even in cases where the identity of the perpetrators is unclear, the choice of victim and the manner in which the abuses have been carried out frequently suggest the involvement of members of the official security forces.

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

- expressing concern that Cristina and Matea Par were attacked because they were exercising their freedom of association and expression;
- asking the government to publicly condemn attacks against those legitimately celebrating Rigoberta Menchú's award of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize or involved in other activities relating to it, and urging the government to take steps to protect them;
- asking for an investigation into the attack and that those responsible be brought to justice;

**APPEALS TO:**

1. President of the Republic:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Telegrams:Presidente Serrano, Guatemala,  
Guatemala**

**Telephone: + 502 2 21212, + 502 2 22266**

**Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU**

**Faxes: + 502 2 537472, 519702**

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

2. Minister of Interior:

Lic. Francisco Perdomo  
Ministro de Gobernación  
Ministerio de Gobernación  
Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Telegrams:Ministro de Gobernación,  
Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Telephone:+ 502 2 21212 ext. 500, 518105-6  
(direct)**

**Telexes: 5085 MINGOB**

**Faxes: + 502 2 518105**

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

3. Minister of Defence:

Gral. José García Samayoa  
Ministro de Defensa  
Ministerio de Defensa  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Telegrams:Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala,  
Guatemala**

**Telephone:+ 502 2 21212, ext 743/744, 21904**

**Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU**

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

4. Head of the National Police

Lic. José María Menéndez  
Director General de la Policía Nacional  
6 Avenida 13-71  
Zona 1, Guatemala  
Guatemala

**Telegrams:Director Policía Nacional,  
Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Faxes: + 502 2 27521**

**Salutation: Señor Director/Dear Sir**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio  
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos  
12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1,  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Maya Coordination "the new dawn"  
Coordinadora Maya Majawil 'Ij  
36 Calle A 2-42  
Zona 8  
Guatemala, Guatemala

Diario Prensa Libre  
13 Calle 9-31, 50 Nivel  
Edificio Prensa Libre  
Zona 1, Guatemala  
GUATEMALA

Head of the Presidential Coordinating  
Commission of the Policies of the Executive  
relating to Human Rights

Sr. Bernardo Neumann  
Presidente

Comisión Presidencial Coordinadora

de la Política del Ejecutivo en  
materia de Derechos Humanos (COPREDEH)  
15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
Faxes: + 502 2 347364

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 December 1992.