

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "disappearance"

30 May 1991

Guatemala:

Silverio PASTOR ITZEP, aged 36

Pablo ITZEP HERNÁNDEZ, aged 46

Silverio PASTOR ITZEP TERCERO, aged 25

Teodoro PASTOR ITZEP, aged 17

Francisco PASTOR HERNÁNDEZ, aged 29

Rolando PASTOR HERNÁNDEZ, aged 19

Pablo Juan PÉREZ

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Silverio Pastor Itzep, Pablo Itzep Hernández, Silverio Pastor Itzep Tercero, Teodoro Pastor Itzep, Francisco Pastor Hernández and Rolando Pastor Hernández, who were arrested without warrant in the Cantón Xequiquel, in Chiul, Cunén municipality, in the department of El Quiché in late May 1991. They are currently detained under the custody of the local Patrulla de Autodefensa Civil (civil defence patrol) without having been brought before a judicial authority and without access to legal counsel.

According to the information received by Amnesty International, at about 11.30 am on 24 May 1991 Silverio Pastor Itzep was taken from his house by the two civil patrol chiefs of his cantón, who then handed him over to the military commissioners in Chiul. Later that day, the military commissioners and the civil patrol chiefs reportedly called all the patrollers of Xequiquel to a meeting in Chiul where they demanded that Silverio Pastor Itzep hand over his 15-year-old daughter, Eusebia Pastor, or inform them where she could be found. She has not been seen since 31 March 1991. The military commissioners claim that she has joined an armed opposition group. Although Silverio Pastor Itzep denied all knowledge of his daughter's whereabouts, the military commissioners reportedly took him away on foot to an unknown destination, refusing to tell the family where he was being taken. Writs of habeas corpus were immediately filed on his behalf, with no result.

Pablo Itzep Hernández was arrested in a similar way by the same two civil patrol chiefs at about 6.30 pm on 26 May, and was also handed over to the military commissioners in Chiul. Relatives of Pablo Itzep Hernández have reported that they have repeatedly been accused of being members of the armed opposition.

On 28 May, at about 5.30 am, Silverio Pastor Itzep Tercero, Teodoro Pastor Itzep (cousins of Silverio Pastor Itzep), Rolando Pastor Hernández and Francisco Pastor Hernández were arrested by civil patrol members and taken to the military post (destacamento) in Chiul. At about 11.00 am, the military reportedly called the villagers to a meeting where the four detainees, together with Pablo Itzep Hernández and Silverio Pastor Itzep, were presented as guerrilla collaborators. At that meeting, Rolando Pastor Hernández and Silverio Pastor Itzep both admitted to some of the charges, and Rolando Pastor Hernández identified Silverio Pastor Itzep's son, Eric Rafael Itzep Castro, as the person who had introduced them to the armed opposition. According to information received by Amnesty International, both men had been made to drink alcohol and consume some drugs before the meeting. At the end of the meeting, the military informed the villagers that the six men would be taken to Santa Cruz del Quiché to be presented to the press as members of the armed opposition and to "resettle them elsewhere" ("para reubicarlos en otro lugar").

Amnesty International is also concerned at the legal situation of Pablo Juan Pérez,

who has reportedly been held for several days at the military post in Chiul under the accusation of being a member of the armed opposition. No legal proceedings have reportedly been initiated against him. (Article 6 of the Guatemalan Constitution provides that no one can be arrested or detained without a warrant issued by the relevant judicial authority, and that those detained should be brought before a magistrate within six hours.)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

President Jorge Serrano Elías took office in Guatemala in January 1991. During his presidential campaign he had pledged to ensure protection of human rights. In April several policemen were sentenced for human rights violations against street children and the establishment of a commission of inquiry into the "disappearance" of over 40,000 people since the early 1980s was announced. However, Amnesty International remains seriously concerned at what appears to be a deterioration in the human rights situation in the country in the past months, including killings, torture and "disappearances".

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern at the reports of the detention without warrant of Silverio Pastor Itzep, Pablo Itzep Hernández, Silverio Pastor Itzep Tercero, Teodoro Pastor Itzep, Francisco Pastor Hernández, Rolando Pastor Hernández and Pablo Juan Pérez;
- urging that they be brought immediately before a judicial authority in compliance with constitutional provisions and that they be granted access to legal counsel;
- asking for guarantees for their physical safety while in detention.

**APPEALS TO**

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams: Presidente Serrano, Guatemala,  
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Señor Acisclo Valladares  
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Ministro de Defensa  
Ministerio de Defensa  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
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**COPIES TO:**

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio  
Procurador de Derechos Humanos  
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Señores  
Consejo de Comunidades Etnicas  
"Runujel Junam" (CERJ)  
5a Avenida 3-13, Zona 5  
Santa Cruz del Quiché  
Guatemala

Padre Andrés Girón León  
Presidente  
Comisión de Derechos Humanos  
Congreso Nacional de la República  
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Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Diario Siglo XXI  
7a Avenida 11-79  
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and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 July 1991.