Further information on UA 64/80 (AMR 19/02/80 21 April) – legal concern

Brazil: Trade unionists arrested

Another leader of the Diadema Metal Workers’ Union, Rubens Teodoro de Aruda, Vice-President of the São Bernardo branch, was arrested on 24 April 1980 by armed policemen as he was leaving a meeting in a car belonging to the town council. The meeting was called to discuss the strike and took place in a church. (There had been some doubt as to whether the police would allow the meeting to take place.)

This latest arrest brings the total number of people now in detention to 14, according to information received by AI. Eleven of those held were allowed visits by their families on 24 April – the first since their arrest; it is hoped that the other detainees will also be allowed visits later today, including Luis Inacio da Silva, the subject of the above UA.

The meeting held on 24 April voted to continue the strike. Another meeting will be held on Saturday 26 April to discuss the question again.

According to reports, an open conflict between the Church and State is developing. President Figueiredo accused the Archbishop of São Paulo, Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns, on 23 April of “inciting the strike”. Dom Paulo replied that the Church did not encourage or organize strikes, nor did it try to influence the decision of strikers. Later the same day the President of the Brazilian Bishops Conference, Dom Ivo Lorscheider met General Godbery, head of the President’s Civil Household.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: As suggested in UA 64/80, mentioning especially Rubens Teodoro de Aruda.

Appeals to:

As given in UA 64/80.

As previously requested, please take no action after 2 May 1980.