

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Under Torture

2 October 1991

BRAZIL: Mauro MARTINS SOLANO, aged 17

Amnesty International is concerned about the death, allegedly under police torture, of Mauro Martins Solano, on 22 September, in Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Central West Brazil.

According to information received by the organization Mauro Martins Solano was detained on the morning of Sunday 22 September by agents of the Civil Police, near his home in Cuiabá. He was accused of stealing some electrical domestic appliances and taken to the Santa Isabel Police Station.

He was then allegedly tortured for several hours, including severe beatings and keeping his head under water until near asphyxiation. Mauro Martins Solano died in the afternoon of the same day, in the police station, in the arms of his wife, aged 16, who was present at the station and witnessed some of the beatings. According to the official death certificate Mauro Martins Solano died from asphyxiation as a result of ingestion of water. He was reported to have three litres of water in his lungs. Two policemen have been charged with causing the death of Mauro Martins Solano but have not yet been detained.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The murder of children and adolescents under the age of 18 has become a feature of everyday life in Brazil's cities. According to the Ministry of Health, violent death among the 15-17 group jumped from 54.3 percent of all causes of death in 1979 to 65 percent in 1986. The figure is believed to be even higher today. According to the MNMMR, 280 children were killed in the first three months of 1991 in the eight Brazilian states where a survey was conducted.

According to the survey those mainly responsible for the children's deaths are death squads, the police and private security agencies. In some of the country's biggest cities, murder is the main cause of death among children and adolescents.

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

- expressing concern at the death of Mauro Martins Solano under police custody on 22 September 1991;

- demanding that Mauro Martins Solano's death be promptly and thoroughly investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Sr Ministro da Justiça do Brasil
Sr Jarbas Passarinho
Ministério da Justiça
Esplanada dos Ministérios
Bloco 23
70.064 Brasilia DF, Brasil

Vossa Excelência

(Minister of Justice)

Telegrams: Ministro da Justiça, Brasilia, Brazil

Telexes: 611003 MNJU BR, 611088 MNJU Br or 612313 MNJU BR

Faxes: + 55 61 224 43 57

Exmo Sr Governador do Estado de Mato Grosso
Sr Jaime Campos
Palacio Paiguas
Centro Politico e Administrativo
78.000 Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil

Vossa Excêlencia

(State Governor)

Telegrams: Governador do Mato Grosso Campos, Mato Grosso, Brasil

Exmo Sr Secretario de Justiça
Estado de Mato Grosso
Sr Oscar Travassos
Centro Político e Administrativo
78.000 Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil

Sr. Secretario

(Secretary of Justice, Mato Grosso)

Telegrams: Secretario de Justica Travassos, Mato Grosso, Brasil

COPIES TO:

President of Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry on the Extermination of Children and Adolescents:

Presidente
Comissão Parlamentaria de Inquérito Destinada a Investigar o Extermíniode
Crianças e Adolescentes
Deputada Rita Camata
Câmara dos Deputados
Palácio do Congresso
Brasília D.F., Brasil

Sr Alceni Guerra
Ministro da Criança

(Minister of the Child)

Esplanada dos Ministerios Bloco 11
70.058 Brasilia D.F., Brasil

Movimento Nacional de (National Street Children Movement - Cuiabá)
Meninos e Meninas de Rua
Comissão Local de Cuiabá
Av Rubens de Mendoca 500
Centro - Cuiabá-
Mato Grosso, Brasil

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 12 November 1991.