

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on 24/92 (AMR 25/05/92, 16 January 1992) - Prisoners of Conscience/Legal Concern

CUBA: Gustavo ARCOS BERGNES, Secretary General of the Comité Cubano Pro Derechos Humanos (CCPDH), Cuban Committee for Human Rights, aged about 65

Sebastián ARCOS BERGNES, brother of the above and member of the CCPDH executive, aged about 60

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Jesús YANES PELLETIER, member of the CCPDH executive

Amnesty International has learned of the release of Gustavo and Sebastián Arcos and Jesús Yanes Pelletier, detained at their homes in Havana on the evening of 15 January 1992. According to the information received, they were held for approximately 24 hours at the headquarters of the Departamento de Seguridad del Estado (DSE), Department of State Security, at Villa Marista before being released with an official warning, advertencia oficial.

No official reason was given for their detention but it is believed to have followed the broadcast on Cuban television, on the evening of their arrest, of extracts from the trial of three men who had been sentenced to death a few days earlier, after being convicted of terrorism, sabotage and enemy propaganda (See UA 16/92, AMR 25/02/92, 13 January 1992). They were caught entering the country illegally from the USA, allegedly with the purpose of carrying out sabotage attacks and terrorist actions. During the trial, one of the defendants read from a notebook the names and addresses of the three CCPDH leaders whom they alleged they had been told to contact if they encountered any problems. Following the television broadcast, large groups of people reportedly gathered outside the house of Gustavo Arcos and carried out what is known as an "acto de repudio", "act of repudiation". Such acts, which have become frequent over recent months and which the authorities claim are the spontaneous response of ordinary citizens to so-called "counter-revolutionary activities", are known in many cases to involve the so-called Destacamentos Populares de Respuesta Rápida, People's Rapid Response Detachments in coordination with the security forces and Communist Party organizations.

No further action is required at present. Many thanks to all those who participated in the action.