

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Torture

28 July 1993

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Juan Díaz ULERIO (peasant)

Amnesty International is deeply concerned about the reported torture of Juan Díaz Ulerio, a peasant from Mate de Palma, Guerra, who was allegedly beaten by police officers and set on fire by a civilian who was accompanying the police.

According to reports, Juan Díaz Ulerio was severely beaten by police officers on 21 July 1993 and subsequently drenched in gasoline and set alight by a tradesman who was accompanying the police. Juan Díaz Ulerio received third degree burns and is currently being treated in hospital.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 21 July 1993 police officers travelling in jeeps and armed with teargas grenades and sub-machine guns allegedly attempted to evacuate peasant families from some plots of land in Mate de Palma, Guerra. These families had been working the land since 1962, when it was handed over to them by the Dominican Agrarian Institute. However, the tradesman is now claiming the land as his.

At his insistence, the police, who reportedly had no evacuation warrant, allegedly unleashed teargas bombs against the peasants on the land. The peasants took refuge inside the homes, but were then apparently forcefully taken out of their homes. Juan Díaz Ulerio was subsequently beaten and burned.

Amnesty International takes no side in land disputes. The organization, however, does take up cases in which persons involved in land disputes are the victims of human rights abuses.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams and airmail letters either in Spanish, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the torture on 21 July of Juan Díaz Ulerio, who was allegedly beaten by police and set alight by a tradesman accompanying the police;
- urging the authorities to take all the necessary steps to ensure that Juan Díaz Ulerio is given adequate protection;
- requesting that the allegations be thoroughly and impartially investigated, the findings made public and those responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO

1) Secretary of State for the Interior and Police

Sr. Atilio Guzmán Fernández

Secretario de Estado del Interior y la Policía

Edif. de Oficinas Gubernamentales 3

Avda. Leopoldo Navarro esq. México

Santo Domingo

Dominican Republic

Telegrams: Secretario de Estado del Interior y la Policía, Santo Domingo,

República Dominicana

Salutation: Sr. Secretario/Dear Secretary

and to diplomatic representatives of the Dominican Republic accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 September 1993.