

ECUADOR José Miguel Cabuyales Alvear, student leader

A student leader has been abducted from his home after taking part in recent protests and demonstrations against the government's economic policies. Amnesty International fears for his safety.

Unidentified men wearing balaclavas reportedly abducted José Miguel Cabuyales Alvear on 5 February from his home in the capital, Quito. He has not been seen since. However, he was able to make a telephone call to a friend. He said that he was being held in a secret place, where he was being tortured and ill-treated and forced to give the names of other leaders of the student movement. The police deny having any knowledge of his detention.

José Miguel Cabuyales Alvear is the leader of the *Federación de Estudiantes Secundarios de Ecuador*, Federation of Secondary Pupils of Ecuador, a student movement which has been involved in recent protests and demonstrations against the government's economic policies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has been concerned about torture and ill-treatment in Ecuador for many years. In 2000, methods of torture and ill-treatment used by the police reportedly included beating detainees, kicking people in the face, stamping on their feet, burning them and applying electric shocks to genitals, tongues and chests.

On 2 February 2001, President Gustavo Noboa Bejarano declared a state of Emergency in the whole country. Amnesty International recognizes that the State has the duty to maintain law and order including establishing a state of emergency. However, extrajudicial executions, torture, "disappearance" and arbitrary detentions cannot be tolerated under any circumstances.

During the past weeks indigenous groups, unions, students and grassroots organizations have staged protests and demonstrations against the government's economic policy. A year ago the then President Jamil Mahuad Witt was forced to resign by mass demonstrations against his economic policies.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of José Miguel Cabuyales Alvear, who was detained on 5 February and has not been seen since;
- urging the authorities to establish his whereabouts, and to carry out an independent and impartial investigation into his abduction, with the results made public;
- urging the authorities to send a clear message to the security forces that the fundamental rights to life, physical integrity and freedom of expression must be protected and respected at all times.

APPEALS TO:President

Dr. Gustavo Noboa Bejarano
Presidente de la República del Ecuador
Palacio de Carondelet

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Garcia Moreno 1043
Quito
ECUADOR

Fax: + 5932 580735

Salutation:Dear President / Sr. Presidente

Minister of the Interior
Dr. Juan Manrique Martínez
Ministro de Gobierno y Policía
Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía
Benalcázar y Espejo
Quito
ECUADOR

Fax: + 5932 580067

Salutation:Dear Minister / Sr. Ministro

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization
Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos
"Segundo Montes Mozo S.J."
Av. 10 de Agosto N 26/27 y Gral Vicente Aguirre
Edif. Tauro, Of 802
Quito
Ecuador

and to diplomatic representatives of Ecuador accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 March 2001.