

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 170/94 Apparent Extrajudicial Execution / Fear for safety 28 April 1994

EL SALVADOR José Isaiás CALZADA MEJÍA, member of FMLN

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On 24 April 1994 José Isaiás Calzada Mejía, member of the political party *Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN)*, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, was killed in the municipality of Jicalapa, Department of La Libertad. His murder adds to the string of killings of opposition members in the context of the presidential and legislative elections which ended on the same day.

Witnesses state that earlier on 24 April, José Isaiás Calzada Mejía received death threats during a quarrel with members of the ruling *Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA)* Nationalist Republican Alliance and the centrist *Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC)* Christian Democratic Party, allegedly about their irregular behaviour during electoral proceedings. José Isaiás Calzada Mejía reportedly returned late in the evening to his home just outside Jicalapa, after votes had been counted in the locality where he had been chairing the election monitoring committee at the local polling station.

Fellow party members found José Isaiás Calzada Mejía's body on 25 April in an open area close to a track on the route to San Salvador. They denounced the murder to the local authorities. The body had several fatal injuries including wounds produced by a firearm. The injuries were verified in a medical examination and the body was transferred to the Legal Medical Institute of Nueva San Salvador.

Reports indicate that on an earlier unspecified date José Isaiás Calzada Mejía had been the target of an armed attack allegedly carried out by local ARENA members and that he and other FMLN activists in the area had previously received death threats.

A judicial investigation into the killing has apparently been initiated. Amnesty International is concerned that it be thorough and impartial, given that most other killings during the election campaign have not been properly investigated. Amnesty International remains concerned for the safety of other opposition party members.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The former armed opposition group FMLN became a political party under the terms of the 1992 Peace Accords which ended 12 years of bitter armed conflict. The Accords included numerous human rights commitments and reforms; many of the most important, including an enquiry into "death squads" and key judicial reforms, have yet to be fully implemented.

Since the election campaign began in late 1993, dozens of leaders and members of the FMLN or other opposition parties have been killed or received death threats. Most cases have not been properly investigated, but the pattern of killings suggests they are the work of forces linked to the government or ruling party. A governmental commission known as the *Grupo Conjunto* (Joint Group) will report in May 1994 on apparently political killings by "illegal armed groups" since 1992.

In the first presidential elections held in El Salvador after 12 years of civil war, the ARENA candidate, Dr Armando Calderón Sol, was elected president. The new president will take office on 1 June. The elections established the FMLN as the largest opposition force in the country.

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

- expressing concern at the killing of José Isaías Calzada Mejía, particularly in view of numerous other recent killings of opposition leaders and members;
- requesting that the investigation be carried out thoroughly and independently and that those responsible be brought to justice;
- asking to be informed of the measures the government and the *Grupo Conjunto* have taken to investigate the series of apparently political killings during the election campaign and to bring to justice those responsible;
- asking what steps it intends to take to comply with the human rights commitments made in the Peace Accords which are still outstanding, such as the reforms to make the judiciary more independent and effective in combatting human rights violations.

**APPEALS TO**

S.E. Alfredo Cristiani Burkard

Presidente de la Republica de El Salvador  
Casa Presidencial  
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Telegrams: Presidente Cristiani, San Salvador. El Salvador**

**Faxes: + 503 810018 / 710950**

**Telexes: 30344 RS SAL**

**Salutation: Su Excelencia/Your Excellency**

(AFTER 1 JUNE please address your appeals to S.E. Armando Calderón Sol)

National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights

Dr. Carlos Molina Fonseca  
Procurador para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos  
Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos  
9<sup>a</sup> Avda. Norte y 5<sup>a</sup> Calle Pte.  
Edificio AMSA, N° 535  
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Faxes: + 503 71 2886**

**Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear Dr. Fonseca**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dr. José Manuel Pacas Castro  
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
Boulevard Manuel Enrique Araujo Km. 6  
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores, San Salvador, El Salvador**

**Faxes: + 503 98 0334/98 0314**

**Telexes: 20179 RREE SAL**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**

PLEASE NOTE AFTER 1 JUNE a new Minister of Foreign Affairs will be appointed

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Organization

Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CDHES)  
Urbanización La Esperanza, Pasaje 1, No. 119  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Oficina de Derechos Humanos (FMLN Human Rights Office)

Frente Farabundo Martí para la  
Liberación Nacional (FMLN)  
Calle Gabriela Mistral No. 209  
San Salvador, El Salvador

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador accredited to your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 June 1994 when new authorities will be appointed.