

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 29/10/96

11 October 1996

Further information on EXTRA 154/96 (AMR 29/09/96, 3 October 1996) - Death Penalty

EL SALVADOR Possible reintroduction of the death penalty

On 10 October, the Salvadorean congress approved, by a majority vote, the controversial law which would reintroduce the death penalty for kidnapping, aggravated homicide and rape. However, this and other penal reforms will not come into force until they have been ratified by a new parliament following elections scheduled to take place in March 1997.

Please note that in the original UA, it was wrongly stated that the general elections to be held next year were for President, Vice-President and deputies: these elections will elect **new deputies only**.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: No further action is required for the moment. Amnesty International will continue to monitor the case and may request more appeals at a later date. You may however write letters in Spanish or in your own language:

- expressing deep regret at the vote to reintroduce the death penalty for certain crimes;
- stating that you consider this to be a seriously retrograde step for the protection of human rights in El Salvador and explaining your unconditional opposition to the death penalty in all cases;
- highlighting the fact that the death penalty has not been shown to have any greater effect on combatting crime than other penal measures;
- noting again that the ratification of this law would constitute an infringement of El Salvador's international commitment under Article 4 of the American Convention of Human Rights.

LETTERS TO:

The President and Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly, as in the original UA.

COPIES TO:

Please refer to original UA.

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador accredited to your country.