

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Threats/Intimidation

4 February 1992

GUATEMALA:

Rosa PU GÓMEZ (female)  
Amílcar MÉNDEZ URÍZAR  
Byron MORALES  
Armando SÁNCHEZ  
Rosalina TUYUC (female)  
Nineth MONTENEGRO DE GARCÍA (female)  
Juan MENDOZA

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Amnesty International is concerned at the recent wave of threats and intimidation against the leaders of human rights and trade union organizations in Guatemala.

Rosa Pu Gómez, a member of Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala (CONAVIGUA), National Coordinating Committee of Widows of Guatemala, reported the following incident. On 31 January 1992 she was on her way to attend a march to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the Spanish Embassy siege, in which at least 37 people were burned to death when security forces attacked the building, when a man approached her from behind. When she turned around he pointed a gun at her. Rosa Pu Gómez ran away but the man grabbed hold of her and asked her if she knew Juana Vásquez, a member of the Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC), Committee of Peasant Unity and Rosalina Tuyuc, the president of CONAVIGUA. The assailant also asked if she knew Luis Miguel Solís Pajarito, the husband of Rosa Pu Gómez and a leader of the Consejo Nacional de Desplazados de Guatemala (CONDEG), Guatemalan National Council for the Displaced, who "disappeared" on 3 May 1990. The man accused her of belonging to either the armed-opposition groups, the Organización Revolucionaria del Pueblo en Armas (ORPA), Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms) or the Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR), Rebel Armed Forces. After Rosa Pu Gómez replied that she did not, he told her to stop working for them and when she tried to argue the man told her he was not asking questions but giving orders. Rosa Pu Gómez reported that she then started walking while still talking with her assailant and bumped into a policeman and sought protection. The policeman, who according to Rosa Pu, seemed to know the assailant told him to leave her alone as "*que anda con un montón de gente*" ("there were many people around her"), but he made no attempt to detain the assailant. Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Rosa Pu Gómez.

Prior to the above incident, on 26 January 1992, Armando Sánchez, General Secretary of the Federación Nacional de Sindicatos de Trabajadores del Estado de Guatemala (FENASTEG), National Federation of Guatemalan State Workers' Unions was approached on the street in Guatemala City. An unknown man came alongside Armando Sánchez, as he was driving home, and handed him a note. The note was a death threat signed by a so-called "death squad", calling itself the "Unidad Anticomunista" (Anti-communist unit). Although previous governments and military regimes characterized these squads as extremist groups "out of government control", Amnesty International has concluded, on the basis of available evidence, that they often are made up of military and security force personnel acting under superior orders or with their connivance.

The death threat, which was typewritten included the name of Armando Sánchez, as well as those of Amílcar Méndez, the president of Consejo de Comunidades Étnicas "Runujel Junam" (CERJ), Council of Ethnic Communities "We are all Equal", an indigenous human rights

organization; Byron Morales, Organizing Coordinator of Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala (UNSI TRAGUA), Guatemalan Workers Union; Rosalina Tuyuc, president of CONAVIGUA; Nineth Montenegro de García the president of Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo por el Aparecimiento con Vida de Nuestros Familiares (GAM), Mutual Support Group for the Appearance of Our Relatives Alive; and Juan Mendoza a leader of CUC. The text of the death threat read as follows "LOS ULTIMOS COMUNISTAS DIRIGENTES POPULARES QUE MORIRAN MASACRADOS. PORQUE HASTA QUE MUERAN SEREMOS FELICES" ("THE LAST COMMUNIST POPULAR LEADERS TO BE MASSACRED. BECAUSE WE WILL NOT BE HAPPY UNTIL THEY ARE DEAD"). Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of all those named in the death threat.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

President Jorge Serrano Elías came to power in January 1991. During his presidential campaign he had pledged to ensure protection of human rights. However, Amnesty International remains seriously concerned at continuing human rights violations in Guatemala, including extrajudicial executions, death threats, torture and "disappearances". As in past years, the choice of victim and the manner in which the abuses have been carried out suggest the involvement of members of the official security forces.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern at the threats and intimidation directed against the leaders and members of human rights and trade union organizations in Guatemala;
- asking that their safety be guaranteed;
- asking for immediate investigations into the assault on Rosa Pu Gómez and the origin of the death threats against the leaders of human rights and trade union organizations;
- urging that the results of the investigations be made public and those found to be responsible be brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO**

1) President:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams: Presidente Serrano, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 537472; + 502 2 519702**  
**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President**

2) Minister of Defence:

General José García Samayoa  
Ministro de Defensa  
Ministerio de Defensa  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 537472**  
**Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Procurator:  
Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio  
Procurador de Derechos Humanos  
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-61

3) Minister of the Interior:

Lic. Fernando Hurtado Prem  
Ministro de Gobernación  
Despacho Ministerial  
Oficina No. 8, Primer Nivel  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams: Ministro Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Telexes: 5085 MINGOB GU**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 518105**  
**Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister**

4) Attorney General:

Señor Acisclo Valladares  
Procurador General de la Nación  
Procuraduría General de la Nación  
18 Calle 10-36  
Zona 1, Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams: Procurador General, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Salutation: Señor Procurador General / Dear Attorney General**

Zona 2, Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Faxes: +502 2 512026**

Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala

(UNSI TRAGUA)

11 Calle 8-14, 3er Nivel  
Edificio Tecún, Of 34  
Zona 1, Guatemala, Guatemala

Consejo de Comunidades Etnicas "Runujel  
Junam" (CERJ)  
5a Avenida 3-13, Zona 5  
Santa Cruz del Quiché, Guatemala

CONAVIGUA

Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala  
4a Calle 9-78  
Zona 1, Guatemala  
Guatemala

Newspaper:

Diario Prensa Libre  
13 Calle 9-31, 50 Nivel  
Edificio Prensa Libre  
Zona 1  
Guatemala, Guatemala

and to diplomatic representatives of  
Guatemala in your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 March 1992.