

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

**AI Index: AMR 34/35/92
Distr: UA/SC**

UA 243/92

Fear of "Disappearance"/Harassment

28 July 1992

GUATEMALA:

**Maritza URRUTIA RUIZ, female, teacher
and other members of her family**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of 32-year-old Maritza Urrutia, reportedly abducted by unidentified men on 23 July 1992 in Guatemala City.

On 23 July at about 8 am, Maritza Urrutia Ruiz was reportedly detained by three heavily armed unidentified men while walking on zone 13 of Guatemala City. She was allegedly forced into a white car with polarized windows and driven away. According to information received by Amnesty International, Maritza Urrutia Ruiz has made three telephone calls to her family from an undisclosed location stating that she was in a good condition and that she was about to go on a "long trip". The family reported the abduction to the police, but apparently the police denies holding her in any detention centre. A writ of *habeas corpus* was filed on her behalf but no other news as to her whereabouts have emerged since.

Maritza Urrutia Ruiz, a private teacher and assistant to a psychologist, had done her university studies at the *Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia* (INAH), National Institute of Anthropology and History in Mexico while in exile.

She returned to Guatemala in 1987. As in so many previous cases over the years, the manner in which she was abducted, by armed men driving a car with polarized windows, suggests the possible involvement of the security forces.

Since Maritza Urrutia Ruiz' abduction, unidentified vehicles with polarized windows have reportedly been seen around her family's home on several occasions.

Amnesty International is also concerned for their safety.

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". Even in cases where the identity of the perpetrators is unclear, the choice of victim and the manner in which the abuses have been carried out frequently suggest the involvement of members of the official security forces.

Tens of thousands of people have been victims of human rights violations such as forced "disappearances", torture and extrajudicial executions in Guatemala over the past 30 years. Those accused by the authorities as "guerrillas" and detained by military and police or by armed civilians acting ostensibly under their command, have been "disappeared". The authorities denied holding them and their families and friends cannot find out what has happened to them.

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

- expressing concern at the reported abduction of Maritza Urrutia Ruiz on 23 July 1992;
- asking for her whereabouts to be made known and that if detained she be charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released;
- asking for her physical safety to be guaranteed;
- asking for a thorough investigation into her abduction, that the results of the investigation be made public and those found to be responsible be brought to justice;

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- expressing concern about the safety of her family and asking the authorities to guarantee their protection.

APPEALS TO:

**1. Vice-President of the Republic
(Acting President while President is on an official visit abroad):**

Sr. Gustavo Espina
Vicepresidente de la República de Guatemala
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Telegrams: Presidente Serrano,
Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Telephone: + 502 2 21212,
+ 502 2 22266**

**Faxes: + 502 2 537472,
+ 502 2 519702**

Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU

**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr.
Presidente / Dear President**

2. Minister of Interior:

Señor Ministro de Gobernación
Ministerio de Gobernación
Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Telegrams: Ministro de
Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Telephone: + 502 2 21212 ext 500,
+ 502 2 518105-6 (direct)**

Faxes: + 502 2 518105

Telexes: 5085 MINGOB

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

3. Minister of Defence:

Gral. José García Samayoa
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa,
Guatemala, Guatemala**

**Telephone: + 502 2 21212 ext 743,
744; + 502 2 21904**

Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

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

4. Head of the National Police

Lic. José María Meléndez
Director General de la Policía
Nacional
6 Avenida 13-71
Zona 1, Guatemala
Guatemala

**Telegrams: Director General
Policia, Guatemala, Guatemala**

Faxes: + 502 2 27521

**Salutation: Sr Director General /
Dear Director General**

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-60 Zona 2, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

President of the Human Rights Commission of Congress:

Lic. Oliverio García Rodas

Presidente
Comisión de Derechos Humanos
Congreso Nacional de la República
9 Av. 9-48, Zona 1
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

President of the Coordinating Committee of the Executive
for Human Rights:

Bernardo Neuman
Comisión Presidencial Coordinadora de la Política del Ejecutivo en
materia de Derachos Humanos (COPREDEH)
15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13
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 accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 September 1992.