

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 270/92 Ill-treatment/Harassment

20 August 1992

GUATEMALA: David Lara, street youth
Olindo Orellana, street youth
Evelyn Marisol del Cid Lima (female), worker with Casa Alianza
Francisco Hugo del Cid Jacobo
Hugo del Cid Lima
Jaime Salvador Crispín Urias, street youth

José Alfredo Cornejo ("Cabellón"), street youth
Marco Tulio Silvestre, worker with Casa Alianza

Amnesty International is concerned at the reported ill-treatment of youngsters involved in the programs of Casa Alianza (Covenant House), an organization working with street children in Guatemala. Amnesty International is also concerned at recent incidents of intimidation against staff working with Casa Alianza. The following incidents are all reported to have taken place in Guatemala City, the capital.

On 16 August 1992, David Lara and Olindo Orellana, both aged 19 and residents of the Casa Alianza group home for older youths, were reportedly leaving the home when three men in plain clothes approached them. The men reportedly identified themselves as police but did not show any identification. They reportedly handcuffed the youngsters, forced them into a car and beat them. The youths were later released.

In a separate incident, on 15 August, Casa Alianza worker Evelyn Marisol del Cid Lima was walking with her father Francisco Hugo del Cid Jacobo and her brother Hugo del Cid Lima in Zone 13 when a car with dark tinted windows drove by at high speed. The occupants of the car reportedly fired in the direction of the three people but no one was hurt.

On 14 August, 23-year-old Jaime Salvador Crispín Urias, a Casa Alianza resident, was reportedly approached by an unidentified armed man and forced into a car with dark tinted windows in Zone 7. He and another man in the car reportedly beat the youth several times on his face and head with their pistols. He was reportedly freed three hours later in Zone 1.

Three days earlier on 11 August, according to reports, street youth José Alfredo Cornejo ("Cabellón") and Casa Alianza counsellor Marco Tulio Silvestre were followed and stopped in the street by two men in plain clothes who reportedly identified themselves as policemen but did not show any identification. The men accused José Cornejo of being a thief and questioned both insistently on their activities. The men threatened to take them both to the National Police headquarters but finally agreed to let the two go. José Alfredo Cornejo has reported being constantly followed and kept under surveillance. He was a member of the so-called "18 street gang", four of whose members were extrajudicially executed in 1990 and a further one in 1991.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Abuses against street children continue to take place in the context of police claims of a spiralling crime rate, particularly in the capital, Guatemala City. The police maintains that in Guatemala City, gangs of street youths (called *maras*) are responsible for high levels of crime. Street educators and those working with street children have also been targeted by the security forces, either because of their work protecting street children from abuse, because they have denounced human rights violations against the street children or because they have provided evidence as witnesses in judicial proceedings against members of the security forces charged with human rights violations against street children (see Guatemala: Children in fear, AI Index AMR 43/24/92, May 1992).

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

- expressing concern at the reported ill-treatment of street youths David Lara, Olindo Orellana and Jaime Salvador Crispín Urias; at the shooting incident involving Evelyn Marisol del Cid Lima, Francisco Hugo del Cid Jacobo and Hugo del Cid Lima and at the harassment of José Alfredo Cornejo ("Cabellón") and Marco Tulio Silvestre;
- asking for an immediate investigation into these incidents and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- urging that immediate and adequate measures be taken to safeguard the physical integrity of Casa Alianza' staff and of street children and youths involved in their programs.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of the Republic:
S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías
Presidente 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:
Lic. Francisco Perdomo
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
Salutation: Sr. Director General /
Dear Sir

3) Head of the National Police:
Lic. José María Menéndez
Director General de la Policía Nacional
6 Avenida 13-71
Zona 1, Guatemala, Guatemala
Telegrams: Director General de la
Policia Nacional, Guatemala,
Guatemala
Faxes: +502 2 27521

4) Human Rights Procurator:

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

**Telegrams: Procurador de Derechos
Humanos, Guatemala, Guatemala**

Salutation: Sr. Procurador / Dear Sir

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Casa Alianza (Guatemala)
Apartado Postal 2704
Ciudad de Guatemala
GUATEMALA

Newspaper:

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

Comission for the Rights of Child:

Lic. Joaquín Bámaca
Presidente
Comisión Pro-Niñez
Congreso de la República
7ta Avenida y 9a Calle
Zona 1, Ciudad de 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 1 October 1992.