

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Ill-treatment

2 October 1992

GUATEMALA: Daniel Estuardo GALÁN, aged 16
Luis Fernando ORTIZ PINEDA
Luis Gerónimo CALDERÓN

Amnesty International is concerned at the reported shooting and then beating of street child Daniel Estuardo Galán by a uniformed member of the Policía Nacional (PN), National Police, and a member of the Guardia de Hacienda, Treasury Police, in Zone 1 of Guatemala City, on 20 September 1992. Amnesty International is also concerned at a separate incident which took place on 24 September 1992, when unidentified men shot at street children sleeping in front of the Casa Alianza, Covenant House, crisis centre also in Zone 1 of Guatemala City.

According to information received by Amnesty International, on 20 September 1992 Daniel Estuardo Galán boarded a bus in the company of four other street children in Zone 1 of Guatemala City. A member of the National Police and a member of the Treasury Police, who the children stated had followed them on to the bus, approached the children and shouted at them. The children tried to get off the bus and the National Policeman shouted at them to "stop because I am going to take you as prisoners to the First Precinct if you don't give me the money that you have stolen" ("*Alto porque los voy a llevar todos presos al primer cuerpo si no me dan el dinero que han robado*"). The children continued to get off the bus and it was then that the policeman took out his gun and fired at the children, wounding Daniel Estuardo Galán on the left buttock. Although wounded, Daniel Galán was grabbed by the policeman, who hit him over the head several times with the butt of his gun. Daniel Galán was left on the street -- no attempt was made to arrest him or provide emergency medical treatment.

The other children told the two policemen that they were going to report them to the Legal Aid Office of Covenant House. The National Policeman replied "I'm not afraid of anything or anyone. Do what you like." ("*No temo a nada ni a nadie. Hagan lo que quieran.*") The children took Daniel Galán to hospital. He had a wound where his left buttock was grazed by a bullet, and also had a 3 cm wound on the left side of his head and a bruise on his forehead, as a result of the beating by the National Policeman.

In a separate incident on 24 September 1992, four street children were sleeping in front of the Covenant House refuge in Zone 1 of Guatemala City, when a white Volkswagen with two men inside drove past the refuge at high speed and shot at the sleeping children with a pellet gun. Luis Fernando Ortiz Pineda was hit on the head and Luis Gerónimo Calderón was hit on the left leg. Luis Ortiz was wounded on the left side of his head. The incident was witnessed by the security guard at the refuge, who was unable to identify the occupants of the vehicle because of the speed at which it was travelling. Several days earlier, on 21 September 1992, three shots were fired from a passing vehicle outside the Covenant House group home "San Francisco" in Zone 7 of Guatemala City, which houses children between the ages of 8 and 14. No one was injured in the incident.

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 maintain that in Guatemala City, gangs of 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 and shooting of street youths Daniel Estuardo Galán, Luis Fernando Ortiz Pineda and Luis Gerónimo Calderón;
- 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 street children.

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**
Telephones: +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

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

(Covenant House)

Casa Alianza
Apartado Postal 2704
Zone 1, Ciudad de Guatemala

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
Salutation:Sr. Director General / Dear Sir

4) (Head of the Presidential Coordinating Commission of the Policies of the Executive relating to Human Rights)

Sr. Bernardo Neumann
Comisión Presidencial Coordinadora
de la Política del Ejecutivo en
materia de Derechos Humanos (COPREDEH)
15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13
Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telephones: +502 2 325041, +502 2 347364
Faxes: + 502 2 347364
Salutation:Sr. Presidente / Mr. President

GUATEMALA

Newspaper:

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

Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de Derechos Humanos
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-60 Zona 2,
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 13 November 1992.