

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Threats

15 June 1993

GUATEMALA:

Jerónimo MORALES TIRIQUIZ, aged 37
Tomás SUY CANIL, aged 34
Candelaria XON GONZALES, aged 30 (female)
Juan MORALES XON, aged 10
Manuela MORALES XON, aged 8 (female)
Anastacia MORALES XON, aged 6 (female)
Domingo MORALES XON, aged 4
Natalia MEJIA RICQUIQC, aged 23 (female)
Rolando Ismael SUY MEJIA, aged 9 months
Carlos MEJIA TIAN, aged 12

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Jerónimo Morales Tiriquiz and Tomás Suy Canil, both members of the Council of Ethnic Communities "We are all Equal", (CERJ), as well as the other members of their families, all from Canton Panquiatic, municipality of Chichicastenango, Quiché department.

On 10 June 1993 the two CERJ members and their families were forced to take refuge due to continued persecution and death threats for not participating in the Civil Defence Patrols (PAC).

According to a statement made by Jerónimo Morales Tiriquiz, he stopped participating in the PAC over a year ago. In May 1993 he began to work on a project organized by the National Coordinating Committee of Guatemalan Widows (CONAVIGUA), concerning military recruitment. Subsequently, on 2 June he was reportedly accused by leaders of the PAC of subversion and threatened with death, in the presence of his family. One member of the PAC reportedly tried to assault Jerónimo Morales, but was restrained by other family members. Since then Jerónimo Morales' wife, Candelaria Xon Gonzáles has received death threats.

Tomás Suy Canil and his family are also believed to be in danger due to their close relationship with the family of Jerónimo Morales. Both families have apparently been persecuted since 2 June 1993.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Civil Defence Patrols (PAC) were created as a component of the military's counter-insurgency strategy in 1982. Although voluntary according to the Constitution, civil patrols are in effect compulsory. Those refusing to take part in them have been branded "guerrillas", and many have been subjected to human rights violations, including harassment and attacks, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution.

CERJ was formed in 1988 to protect indigenous peoples' rights, and has been particularly active in protesting against peasants being forced to join the PAC. Since then more than 15 CERJ members have been extrajudicially executed, seven have "disappeared", and scores have been subjected to intimidation or harassment by members of the security forces, civil

patrollers, military commissioners or civilians acting in connivance with the military.

On 6 June 1993 Ramiro de León Carpio, previously the Human Rights Procurator, was voted president by Congress, following the forced resignation of Jorge Serrano on 1 June 1993.

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

- expressing concern at the incidents of threats and harassment against Jerónimo Morales Tiriquiz and Tomás Suy Canil, as well as other members of their families;
- asking for guarantees for the security of both families;
- asking that these incidents be immediately investigated and that those found to be responsible be brought to justice;
- drawing attention to President de León Carpio's inaugural speech in which he declared his commitment to human rights; state that you are aware of the difficulties

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facing his government, but that you hope that incidents such as those mentioned above will not be tolerated.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of the Republic: **Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President**
S.E. Ramiro de León Carpio
Presidente de la República de Guatemala
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Presidente de León Carpio, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 537472, + 502 2 519702
Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU

2) Minister of Interior: **Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**
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)
Telexes: 5085 MINGOB

3) Minister of Defence: **Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**
Gral. Roberto Perussina
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 537472
Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Council of Ethnic Communities "We are all Equal"
Consejo de Comunidades Étnicas, CERJ:
5a Avenida 3-13,
Santa Cruz del Quiché
El Quiché
GUATEMALA

Head of the Presidential Commission Coordinating the Policies of the Executive relating to Human Rights:
Sr. Bernardo Neumann
COPREDEH

15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country. The World Conference on Human Rights is being held in Austria this month and you can enhance the power of your appeals by also sending copies to the diplomatic representative of Guatemala in Austria during June at the following address:

GUATEMALAN EMBASSY:

The Ambassador
Botschaft der Republik Guatemala
Reisnerstrasse 20/1/4, 1030 Wien
Austria

Faxes: + 43 1 714 35 69

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27th July 1993.