

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 433/91      Intimidation/Harassment

11 December 1991

GUATEMALA:      Byron Morales  
                 Armando Sánchez

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Amnesty International is seriously concerned at the reported incident involving trade unionists Byron Morales and Armando Sánchez, on or around 16 November 1991 in the Villanueva district, near Guatemala City. Byron Morales is the Coordinador de Organización (Organizing Coordinator) of the Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala (UNSI TRAGUA), Guatemalan Workers Union. Armando Sánchez is the Secretario General de la Federación Nacional de Sindicatos de Trabajadores del Estado (FENASTEG), Secretary General of the National Federation of State Workers.

According to information received by Amnesty International, on or around 16 November 1991, at about 10:00pm, Byron Morales and Armando Sánchez were driving a car when they noticed that they were being followed by another vehicle without number plates nor lights on. Three men in civilian clothes were reportedly in the second car, which tried to overtake and block the way of Byron Morales and Armando Sánchez' car. After a chase lasting several kilometres, the trade unionists reportedly managed to escape.

In June 1991, Byron Morales was the victim of a similar incident, when two vehicles with armed men inside, allegedly tried to block the way of the car he was driving. Thanks to the heavy traffic, Byron Morales was able to escape unharmed.

Amnesty International remains very concerned for their safety.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Trade unionists and members of popular movements have been targeted since the government of Jorge Serrano Elías took office in January 1991 in a renewed wave of human rights violations. Amnesty International has learned of a large number of threats, intimidation, abduction and torture as well as possible extrajudicial executions against trade union leaders and members of popular movements in recent months (see Guatemala: Trade Unionists and Political Activists Targeted under the New Government of June 1991, AMR 34/28/91; UA 242/91, AMR 34/30/91 of 16 July 1991 and follow-up AMR 34/38/91 of 21 August 1991. See also Human Rights Violations against Trade Unionists in Latin America, AMR 01/02/91 of September 1991). The choice of the victim and the manner in which these abuses have been carried out suggest the involvement of the security forces in the guise of the so-called "death squads". Over twenty trade unionists have been forced to leave the country as a result of direct threats or other human rights violations against themselves.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

- expressing concern at the incident involving trade unionists Byron Morales and Armando Sánchez;

- asking that the incident be investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice;

- asking that adequate steps be taken to protect the lives and physical integrity of Byron Morales and Armando Sánchez.

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**APPEALS TO:**

1) President:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala

**Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /  
Dear President**

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

**Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU**

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

2) Minister of the Interior:

Lic. Fernando Hurtado Prem  
Ministro de Gobernación  
Despacho Ministerial  
Oficina No. 8, Primer Nivel  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala

**Señor Ministro /  
Dear Minister**

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

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**Faxes: + 502 2 518105**

3) Attorney General:

Señor Acisclo Valladares  
Procurador General de la Nación  
Procuraduría General de la Nación  
18 Calle 10-36  
Zona 1, Guatemala  
Guatemala

**Señor Procurador General /  
Dear Attorney General**

**Telegrams: Procurador General, Guatemala, Guatemala**

**COPIES TO:**

Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio  
Procurador de Derechos Humanos  
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-61  
Zona 2,  
Guatemala, Guatemala

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

Guatemalan Workers Union:

Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de  
Guatemala (UNSI TRAGUA)

President of the Human Rights  
Commission of Congress:  
Padre Andrés Girón León  
Presidente  
Comisión de Derechos Humanos  
Congreso Nacional de la República  
9 Av. 9-48, Zona 1  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Newspaper:  
Diario Siglo XXI  
7a Avenida 11-79  
Edificio Galerias España, 6o piso  
Zona 9, 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 22 January 1992.