

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 34/59/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 309/93 Fear for safety

7 September 1993

GUATEMALA: Maurillo Chiquin, member of CONDEG

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Maurillo Chiquin, a member of the Consejo Nacional de Desplazados de Guatemala (CONDEG), the National Council of the Displaced of Guatemala. Maurillo Chiquin had travelled to the city of Cobán in Alta Verapaz on 1 September 1993 in order to do some work there. He arrived in the evening, and checked into a boarding house to rest. There, he realised that he was being watched by two men dressed in civilian clothes but wearing military boots - often a sign of membership in the Civil Defence Patrols or of other military connections - who were checking to see which room he was staying in. When he realised this, he left the boarding house, and headed in the direction of the Cathedral. The two men, carrying firearms, followed him there.

Given the past history of abuses and intimidation directed against members of CONDEG by members of the army and paramilitary forces, Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Maurillo Chiquin.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CONDEG was founded in September 1989 to defend the rights of displaced Guatemalans, the majority of them indigenous peasants, who fled areas of conflict during the Guatemalan army's counter-insurgency campaign of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The army apparently continues to consider displaced persons, and those working with them, particularly those affiliated to CONDEG, as "subversive," and members and leaders of the group have suffered human rights violations in recent years, including "disappearance," extrajudicial execution, intimidation and harassment. (see GUATEMALA: Impunity - A Question of Political Will, AMR 34/17/93, May 1993, pp. 18-19.) Most recently, as reported in UA 259/93 (AMR 34/52/93, 6 August 1993), CONDEG members were amongst demonstrators fired upon in Colotenango, Huehuetenango on 3 August 1993 by members of the Civil Defence patrols. At least one person died in the attack and several others were reportedly wounded. The demonstrators had been staging a peaceful protest against alleged threats and harassment of local families by members of the Guatemalan army and the Civil Defence Patrols.

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

-expressing concern at reports that Maurillo Chiquin, a member of CONDEG, was reportedly followed by two armed men in plain clothes on 1 September, 1993, giving cause for concern for his safety;

-noting that the previous pattern of abuses against CONDEG members by members

of the Guatemalan security forces and the paramilitary Civil Defence Patrols suggests that those following Maurillo Chiquin may have been official security force agents or Civil Defence Patrollers acting at military behest;

-urging that the incident be immediately investigated and those responsible brought to justice and that steps be immediately taken to ensure the physical integrity of Maurillo Chiquin;

-asking for information as to the progress of inquiries into the shooting incident at Colotenango on 3 August 1993, when members of CONDEG were amongst the peaceful crowd of demonstrators fired upon by members of local Civil Defence Patrols, in a incident which resulted in at least one death and several injuries.

APPEALS TO

1) President of the Republic:

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
Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /Dear President

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Arnoldo Ortiz Moscoso
Ministro de Gobernación
Ministerio de Gobernación
Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 518105
Telexes: 5085 MINGOB
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

3) Minister of Defence:

Gral. Mario Enríquez Morales
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 537472
Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Jorge García Laguardia
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos
12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1,
Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Faxes: + 502 2 81734

Head of the Presidential Commission Coordinating the Policies of the Executive relating to Human Rights:

Lic. Jorge Gonzalo Cabrera Hurtarte

Presidente

COPREDEH

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Guatemala, GUATEMALA

CONDEG

7a Avenida 8-56, zona 1

Edificio El Centro

7° Nivel, Oficina 7-12

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 19 October 1993.