

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "disappearance"/Fear for Safety

5 November 1993

**GUATEMALA** Francisco GUARCAS CIPRIANO, 38, a member of the *Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo por el Aparecimiento con Vida de Nuestros Familiares (GAM)*, Mutual Support Group for the Appearance of Our Relatives Alive,

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Francisco Guarcas Cipriano, following his "disappearance" after being reportedly kidnapped from his workplace in the Guatemala City bus terminal in Zone 4.

On 19 October 1993, Francisco Guarcas, from Semejá II, Chichicastenango, was reportedly seen being led away, tied up, by four army collaborators and ex-members of the *Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil (PAC)*, Civil Defence Patrols, from Semejá II. He runs a small business and has seven children.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For many years Amnesty International has been concerned about human rights violations directed against targeted groups, including trade unionists, student leaders, journalists and those working with non-governmental organizations, particularly those attempting to investigate and protect human rights, who have been long-term targets of abuses in Guatemala, including harassment, threats, torture, "disappearances", and extrajudicial executions.

Members of GAM have been object of human rights violations on many occasions in the past. Most recently, on 27 October 1993 armed men reportedly invaded the GAM offices, beat a female member of GAM in the office at the time and confiscated all their records and equipment (see follow-up on UA 379/93, AMR 34/77/93, 29 October 1993; UA 379/93, AMR 34/76/93, 27 October 1993). Over the years since the group was formed in 1984, GAM members have repeatedly been subjected to threats, their offices have suffered grenade and bomb attacks and some leaders and members have been killed in circumstances suggesting they were extrajudicially executed. Recently, flyers distributed for several days' running in Guatemala City by the *Movimiento Indígena Revolucionario*, Indigenous Revolutionary Movement, denounce Nineth Montenegro, GAM's president, and other prominent Guatemalans as corrupt and involved with drug trafficking. Often in the past, such allegations have preceded attacks against the persons so accused.

On 6 June 1993 Ramiro de León Carpio, previously the Human Rights Procurator, was voted president by Congress to serve out the remaining term of President Jorge Serrano Elías. Ex-president Serrano had been forced from office after trying to seize near-dictatorial powers on 25 May 1993. When President de León Carpio came to power there were expectations and hopes in certain quarters that he might be able to improve the human rights situation, due to his previous

role as Human Rights Procurator. However, in recent weeks there has been a spate of incidents of threats and intimidation directed at targeted groups, including trade unionists, journalists, and those working with non-governmental organizations, particularly those attempting to investigate and protect human rights.

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

- expressing concern about the "disappearance" of Francisco Guarcas Cipriano following his reported kidnap on 19 October;
- urging the authorities to clarify his legal situation;
- asking that if held in detention his safety is guaranteed and that he is granted access to an independent lawyer and a doctor;
- urging that he either be released or brought promptly before a competent court;
- urging protection for other members of GAM, including its President Nineth Montenegro, who has recently been the object of unverified allegations of corruption and drug trafficking.

**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:**

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

COPREDEH  
15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Human Rights Procurator  
Lic. Jorge García Laguardia  
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos  
12 Avenida 12-72  
Zona 1, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

CODEHUCA  
Apartado Postal 189  
1002 San José, Costa Rica

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 17 December 1993