

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 104/92 Fear of Extrajudicial Execution

30 March 1992

HONDURAS: Antonio ZELAYA REYES, human rights worker

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Antonio Zelaya Reyes, president of the regional Olancho department chapter of the *Comité para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos en Honduras (CODEH)*, the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Honduras. He was the subject of an attack allegedly carried out by an agent of the *Dirección Nacional de Investigaciones (DNI)*, the National Directorate of Investigations, the investigative branch of the Honduran security forces.

The attack took place at about 6.00pm on 25 March 1992, at the studios of *Radio Catacamas*, in Olancho, as Antonio Zelaya Reyes was getting ready for his daily broadcast of a radio programme by CODEH covering national and regional news related to human rights abuses. According to CODEH, an armed man in plainclothes, identified by Antonio Zelaya Reyes and witnesses as an agent of the DNI, broke into the studios and told him at gunpoint that he was going to kill him. At that point the gunman was reportedly disarmed by witnesses. He then fled.

Antonio Zelaya Reyes had reportedly been warned indirectly 48 hours before the attack that his life was in danger. Two CODEH workers in San Pedro Sula, department of Cortés, have also reportedly received the same threats.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Human rights activists in Honduras, and in particular members of CODEH, have for many years been the targets of killings, physical attacks, intimidation and death threats. In January 1988, Miguel Angel Pavón Salazar, president of the San Pedro Sula chapter of CODEH, was shot dead in San Pedro Sula, allegedly by armed men linked to a military intelligence unit. More recently, prominent members of CODEH including its President Dr. Ramón Custodio López, have received repeated anonymous death threats. No one has ever been brought to justice for such incidents, the circumstances of which suggest the possible participation of official security forces, or of groups acting with their acquiescence.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the attempted assault on Antonio Zelaya Reyes by a man identified as a DNI agent, and at the death threats received by him and other CODEH members;
- requesting an immediate and thorough investigation of the incident and the prosecution of those found responsible;
- urging that effective measures be taken to ensure the personal safety of Antonio Zelaya Reyes and other members of CODEH in Honduras, and to prevent similar attacks and harassment in the future.

APPEALS TO:

1. President of the Republic:

S.E. Rafael Leonardo Callejas **[Salutation: Sr. Presidente]**
Presidente de la República de Honduras
Casa Presidencial
6^a Avenida, 1^a Calle
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Telegrams: Presidente Callejas, Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Telexes: 1429 HO
Faxes: + 504 37-9656

2. Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Dr. Mario Carías Zapata **[Salutation: Sr. Ministro]**
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Edificio Atalaya,
Avenida La Paz
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Telexes: 1129 MMRR
Faxes: + 504 31-0097

3. Attorney General:

Lic. Leonardo Matute Murillo **[Salutation: Sr. Procurador]**
Procurador General de la República
Procuraduría General de la República
Calle Principal 107
Colonia Reforma
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Telegrams: Procurador General de la República
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Faxes: + 504 38-3130

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Dr. Ramón Custodio López **[Salutation: Estimado Dr. Custodio]**
Presidente
Comité para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos en Honduras (CODEH)
Apartado Postal 3189
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Cnel. Noé Flores Velásquez **[Salutation: Sr. Coronel]**
Director General
Dirección Nacional de Investigaciones (DNI)
Barrio La Fuente
Avenida Lempira 515
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Sr. Director (local newspaper)
[Salutation: Sr. Director]
Diario Tiempo
1^o Calle, 5^a Avenida N.E., 102
Apartado Postal 450
San Pedro Sula, Honduras

and to diplomatic representatives of Honduras in your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 May 1992.