

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/02/96

UA 12/96

Threats / Fear for safety

22 January 1996

MEXICOLourdes Feiguerez (f), human right activist

Victor Clark Alfaro, human right activist

On 15 January 1996 Lourdes Feiguerez, researcher at the *Centro Bi-nacional de Derechos Humanos*, CBDH, Bi-national Centre of Human Rights, received a series of threatening phone calls at the NGO's office in Tijuana, Baja California referring to her and Victor Clark, the head of the Centre. They have apparently been threatened because of their work on a case involving three members of the *Policía Judicial del Estado*, PJE, State Judicial Police, accused of torture.

The anonymous caller indicated that they had been observing the two human rights activists and were looking for Victor Clark and that they knew that he had not been in the Centre that whole day. The caller is reported to have said:

"Listen to me you son of a bitch, you and this fag homosexual Victor Clark are going to bloody hell because you are defending some shameless rats...."

("Oyeme hija de tu chingada madre, tú y ese joto homosexual de Victor Clark se los va a cargar su chingada madre, porque se están metiendo mucho en defender unas ratas sinverguenzas".)

Since September 1995 the CBDH has been working on the case of the alleged torture of five young people, including two minors, by three members of the PJE in Tijuana. In judicial proceedings brought against them, the three PJE members were found guilty of torture, and the court called for them to be dismissed.

However, in December, when the three were still in their posts, the CBDH pressed for a meeting with the *Procurador del Estado*, State Attorney in Tijuana. This meeting led to the recent dismissal of the three agents. This is the first time that the Centre has been able to bring to justice members of the PJE accused of torture, even though they have documented 425 cases of torture in Baja California since 1987.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Threats and harassment against those active in promoting and protecting human rights in Mexico are reported to be on the increase. Amnesty International has repeatedly expressed its concerns to the Mexican authorities about the lack of safeguards provided to protect such activists. The organization believes that the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of these threats is the main reason for the persistence of these abuses against human right activists (see UA 09/96, AMR 41/01/96, 16 January 1996; UA 203/95, AMR 41/19/95, 18 August 1995; UA 157/95, AMR 41/14/95, 4 July and UA 105/95, AMR 41/11/95, 3 May).

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Lourdes Feiguerez and Victor Clark, apparently threatened because of their work on a torture case involving members of the State Judicial Police in Tijuana, Baja California;
- calling for immediate measures to guarantee their safety;
- urging a prompt and thorough investigation into the threats and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take measures to ensure the safety of all human rights workers in Mexico.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of the Republic

Lic. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León
Presidente de la República
Palacio Nacional
06067, México D.F., MEXICO

Telegrams: Presidente Zedillo, México D.F., México

Telexes: 170937 sppnme; 1774468 sppnme

Faxes: + 52 5 271 1764

Salutation: Sr. President/Dear President

2) Minister of the Interior

Lic. Emilio Chuayffet Chemor
Secretario de la Gobernación
Secretaría de la Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er piso
Col. Juárez
06699, México DF, MÉXICO

Telegrams: Secretario Gobernación, México D.F., México

Faxes: + 52 5 546 7388

Salutation: Sr. Secretario/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

1) Weekly magazine

Sr. Editor
El Mexicano
Carretera al Aeropuerto s/n
Fracc. Alamar
Apdo 2333 Tijuana,
Baja California Norte
MÉXICO

2) Weekly magazine

Sr. Editor
La Jornada
Balderas 68
06050, México D.F., MÉXICO

3) Human Rights Organization

Sres.
Centro Bi-nacional de Derechos Humanos
Apartado Postal 848
Tijuana,
Baja California Norte 22000, MÉXICO

and to diplomatic representatives of México accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 March 1996.