

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death threats / Fear for safety

1 June 1994

MEXICO André AUBRY, ethnosociologist and historian
 Angélica Sara INDA Y BUENDÍA (f), married to André Aubry
~~Rafaela LÓPEZ MORALES (f), secretary~~
 Matilde MORENO (f), secretary

André Aubry, his wife, and two secretaries working with him have received death threats and there is serious concern for their safety. The threats are the latest in a series of threats and attacks against human rights monitors and indigenous leaders in Chiapas.

André Aubry has lived in the state of Chiapas for more than 20 years. He is coordinator of a Mexican foundation, the *Instituto de Asesoría Antropológica para la Región Maya (INAREMAC)*, Institute of Anthropological Advice for the Maya Region, based in the town of San Cristóbal de las Casas. The work of the Institute includes developing important historical archives, and it has published more than a hundred publications in several languages. These publications were in demand by the hundreds of journalists and representatives of non-governmental organizations who went to Chiapas following the uprising there in January 1994.

On 3 May 1994, two men, who refused to identify themselves, tried to enter the building where the archives are stored in order, they said, to take away the computer. The incident was reported to the Ministry of the Interior (the ministry responsible for the National Archive System to which these archives are registered) and a special envoy was dispatched to the area. The envoy gave assurances that protection would be given. Ten days later, however, the same men again tried to take the computer away and threatened the two secretaries for having reported the previous incident.

André Aubry has received death threats over the telephone, both at his office and at home. One of the written death threats stated: "*We know perfectly well that you are an accomplice of the bishop (*) and that you produce Marcos' (**)* press releases. *We want you out of the archives and if you do not go we will be obliged to throw you out of the country ... [sign of the cross] or you'll die*". ("*Sabemos perfectamente que usted es cómplice con el obispo, que usted hace los comunicados de Marcos. Queremos que salgan del archivo y si no lo hace, nos veremos obligados a sacarlo del país ... [signo de la cruz] o se mueren*".)

André Aubry reported the incidents to the authorities and two policemen are now guarding the building where the archives are kept. Amnesty International remains concerned, however, for the physical safety of the four.

* "the bishop" refers to Bishop Samuel Ruíz, a mediator in the conflict in Chiapas, who has himself been threatened.

** "Marcos" refers to the spokesperson for the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 1 January 1994, hundreds of armed peasants, calling themselves the EZLN,

took control of several towns in the state of Chiapas. There was heavy fighting for several days. On 12 January the government declared a ceasefire, although there were reports of continuing land attacks by the armed forces during the following days. An Amnesty International delegation visiting the area in late January confirmed earlier reports of a number of human rights abuses, including the extrajudicial execution of at least five rebels and the torture of rebel and civilian detainees at the hands of the security forces. In March, two peasant leaders working with local Indian communities in negotiations between the Mexican Government and the EZLN were killed, in circumstances suggesting they were extrajudicially executed.

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

- expressing concern at the death threats against the four people named above, and urging that all necessary measures be taken to ensure their safety;
- urging that an investigation into these allegations be conducted immediately and that those responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO

1) President of the Republic

Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio Nacional, 06067 México D.F., Mexico
Telegrams: Presidente Salinas, México D.F., Mexico
Telexes: 170937 sppnme; 1774468 sppnme
Faxes: +52 5 271 1764
Salutation: Sr. Presidente/Dear President

2) Interior Minister

Dr Jorge Carpizo McGregor
 Secretario de Gobernación
 Secretaría de Gobernación
 Bucarelli 99, 1er piso
 Colonia Juárez, 06669 México DF, MEXICO
Telegrams: Secretario Gobernación, México D.F., Mexico
Telexes: 1774376, 1774375
Faxes: +52 5 592 0014
Salutation: Sr. Secretario de Gobernación/Dear Minister

3) Attorney General's Office

Lic Humberto Benítez Treviño
 Procurador General de la República
 Procuraduría General de la República
 Paseo de la Reforma y Violeta
 Colonia Guerrero, 06300 Mexico DF, MEXICO
Telegrams: Procurador General, Mexico D.F., Mexico
Telexes: 1777572
Faxes: +52 5 526 8506
Salutation: Sr Procurador General/Dear Attorney General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) National Human Rights Commission
 Sres.
 Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos

Periférico Sur 3469
Col San Jerónimo Lídice
10200 México DF, Mexico

2) Institute of Anthropological Advice for the Mayan Region

Sres.

INAMERAC

Apartado Postal 6
San Cristóbal de las Casas,
29200 Chiapas, Mexico

3) Daily newspaper

Sr. Editor

La Jornada

Balderas 68

06050 México DF, Mexico

and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 July 1994.