

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/018/2009

27 March 2009

UA 88/09 Fear for safety/Fear of torture/Possible enforced disappearances

MEXICO Miguel Alejandro Gama Habif (m), aged 25  
Israel Ayala Ramírez (m), aged 20

---

The two men named above were detained by soldiers on the evening of 17 March in the town of Nuevo Laredo, in the northern state of Tamaulipas. They have not been seen since, and their relatives fear that they are being held in a clandestine detention facility and are at risk of torture.

According to relatives, they were seen being stopped by soldiers as they were driving through Nuevo Laredo. Miguel Alejandro Gama managed to phone his wife to let her know that he had been stopped by soldiers, but the call was cut off suddenly. According to his wife, later that evening soldiers searched her house without a warrant, taking computers, mobile phones, documents, money and even food. She also claims that soldiers were seen driving her husband's car the day after he was detained.

Relatives of the two men filed a habeas corpus petition (*amparo*) and went looking for them at the local military barracks, but the military authorities denied having them in custody. On 20 March relatives filed a complaint of enforced disappearance with the Federal Attorney General's Office.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since 2007, violence arising from organized crime has spiralled in Mexico. In 2008, more than 6,000 people were killed in violent incidents that the authorities attributed to organized crime. President Calderón's administration has attempted to deal with drug-related violent crime by deploying thousands of federal police and some 45,000 soldiers in the worst affected areas, including cities such as Nuevo Laredo. However violent crime has continued unabated. Reports of unlawful killings, torture, arbitrary detentions and illegal house searches by soldiers and police have increased, many of which the authorities have not adequately investigated.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Miguel Alejandro Gama and Israel Ayala, who were seen being detained by soldiers on 17 March 2009 in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas state;
- urging the authorities to make every effort to locate Miguel Alejandro Gama and Israel Ayala;
- calling on them to order an independent and impartial investigation into the unlawful detention of Miguel Alejandro Gama and Israel Ayala, and bring those responsible to justice;
- calling on the authorities to immediately acknowledge the detention of Miguel Alejandro Gama and Israel Ayala, if they are in custody, and ensure that they are given access to their families, lawyers and any medical attention they may require, and are charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released;
- calling for effective measures to ensure police and military anti-crime operations are carried out in accordance with the law and international human rights standards, and that any alleged abuses are promptly and impartially investigated.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

Minister of National Defence  
Gral. Guillermo Galván Galván

Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional  
Blvd. Manuel Ávila Camacho s/n, esq. Av. Industria Militar  
Col. Lomas de Sotelo, Del. Miguel Hidalgo  
México D.F., C.P. 11640, MÉXICO  
**Fax: (+52 55) 55575571**  
**Email: dn\_sdn@mailsedena.gob.mx**  
**Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister**

President of Mexico  
Lic. Felipe de Jesús Calderón Hinojosa  
Presidente Constitucional de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos  
Residencia Oficial de "Los Pinos", Casa Miguel Alemán  
Col. San Miguel Chapultepec  
México D.F., C.P. 11850  
Mexico  
**Fax: +52 55 50935321**  
**Email: felipe.calderon@presidencia.gob.mx**  
**Salutation: Señor Presidente/Dear President**

Attorney General of the Republic  
Lic. Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza  
Procuraduría General de la República  
Av. Paseo de la Reforma n° 211-213, Piso 16  
Col. Cuauhtémoc, Delegación Cuauhtémoc  
México D.F., C.P. 06500, MEXICO  
**Fax: +52 55 53 46 09 08**  
**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador General**

President of the National Human Rights Commission  
Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández, Presidente de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos,  
Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, Edificio "Héctor Fix Zamudio", 6° piso  
Blvd. Adolfo López Mateos n° 1922, Col. Tlacopac San Ángel, Del. Álvaro Obregón  
México D.F., C.P. 01040, MEXICO  
**Fax: +52 55 5681 7199**  
**Salutation: Señor Presidente/Dear President**

**COPIES TO:**

Human rights organization  
Centro de Estudios Fronterizos y de Promoción de los Derechos Humanos A.C. - CEFPRODHAC  
Calle Allende 245, Zona Centro, Cd. Reynosa, Tamaulipas, C. P. 88500.

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 8 May 2009.