

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/029/2001

UA 180/01 Fear of torture or ill-treatment

20 July 2001

MEXICO

Gerardo Cabrera Gonzalez [m]
Members of the *Organización de Campesinos Ecologistas de la Sierra de Petetlán y Coyuca de Catalán (OCESP)*

Gerardo Cabrera González has been detained by the Mexican army. Amnesty International fears that he may be tortured or ill-treated.

On 14 July members of the 19th Infantry Battalion arrived in the community of Banco Nuevo, Petetlán municipality, Guerrero state. They arrested Gerardo Cabrera González and took him to Petetlán Barracks. He has reportedly been transferred to Acapulco civil prison and charged with illegal possession of arms.

Gerardo Cabrera González is a member of the *Organización de Campesinos Ecologistas de la Sierra de Petetlán y Coyuca de Catalán (OCESP)*, Peasant Environmentalist Organization of the Mountains of Petetlán and Coyuca de Catalán, which campaigns to stop logging operations threatening forests in the state of Guerrero. Over recent years other members and supporters of the OCESP have been arbitrarily arrested and tortured or ill-treated. Some have received death threats and one has "disappeared".

In 1999 OCESP members Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera were arbitrarily detained by the military in Guerrero and forced under torture to confess to fabricated crimes, including the illegal possession of arms (see Extra 52/00, AMR 41/25/00, 30 May 2000 and follow-ups). Amnesty International believes they were targeted by the authorities purely because of their peaceful activities to prevent logging. Amnesty International has adopted both men as prisoners of conscience and continues to call for their immediate and unconditional release. The judicial authorities have never effectively investigated the allegations of torture made by the two men, and the confessions extracted under torture continue to be accepted by the courts.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Political violence is endemic in Guerrero. There is a heavy military presence in many parts of the state, ostensibly to combat armed opposition groups and drug trafficking. This, together with the presence armed opposition groups, has contributed to the grave human rights situation in the state. Over the years there have been persistent reports of the military being responsible for human rights violations.

The OCESP was set up in 1998 to campaign against what many communities considered the excessive logging of local forests. According to the OCESP, the logging, which continues to this day, benefits local political bosses, who are protected by the military and paramilitary groups in the area.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Gerardo Cabrera González, who was detained by the army in Petetlán municipality, Guerrero state on 14 July;
- urging the authorities to guarantee his safety and ensure that he is not tortured or ill-treated;
- calling for him to be granted access to medical attention, a lawyer and relatives;
- asking the authorities to ensure that any judicial procedures meet international standards for fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic
Lic. Vicente Fox Quesada

Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos
Residencia Oficial de "Los Pinos"
Col. San Miguel Chapultepec
México D.F., C.P. 11850
MÉXICO

Telegrams: President, Mexico D.F., Mexico
Fax: + 52 5542 76 62
Salutation: Señor Presidente / Dear Mr President

Attorney General of the Republic
General Rafael Marcial Macedo de la Concha
Procurador General de la Republica
Procuraduría General de la República
Reforma Norte esq.Violeta 75
Col. Guerrero, delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P. 06300
MEXICO

Telegrams: Procurador General, Mexico D.F., Mexico
Fax: + 52 5 346 2776 / 346 0904
Salutation: Senor Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

Governor of Guerrero
Lic. René Juárez Cisneros
Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero
Palacio de Gobierno, segundo piso
Plaza Central, Primer Congreso de Anahuac
Colonia Centro
Chilpancingo 39000
Guerrero
MEXICO

Telegrams: Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero, Guerrero, Mexico
Fax: + 52 747 2 3125/747 10334
Salutation: Señor Gobernador / Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Human Rights organization
Centro de Derechos Humanos "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez"
Serapio Rendón 57-B, Col. San Rafael
México DF, CP 06470 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 31 August 2001.