

MEXICO Brigadier General José Francisco Gallardo Rodríguez

Prisoner of conscience, Brigadier General José Francisco Gallardo Rodríguez, who was jailed in 1993 for criticizing human rights violations by the Mexican armed forces, was reportedly transferred to a punishment cell on 28 August. General Gallardo may have been transferred in reprisal for his recent press statements and Amnesty International is concerned for his safety, as he may be held prison conditions which amount to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

Prison authorities have reportedly claimed that General Gallardo was transferred to the punishment cell within Bordo de Xochiara prison, Nezahualcoyotl city for his own protection. Two days earlier the General had appeared in an article in the national newspaper, El Universal. He was quoted as saying that prior to and after his detention in 1993, military intelligence units regularly used covert illegal methods, in order to harass and intimidate himself and his family.

General Gallardo's family and human rights organizations have appealed to the Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to issue protection measures (*medidas cautelares*) to force the Mexican authorities to guarantee the General's safety. In 1996, the IACHR had ruled that the Mexican authorities should immediately release General Gallardo. The authorities have yet to comply with this ruling.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Brigadier General José Francisco Gallardo Rodríguez, has been imprisoned for the last seven years for criticizing human rights violations by the Mexican armed forces and for proposing the creation of a human rights ombudsman to investigate these violations. In the past, members of General Gallardo's family have suffered threats and intimidation (See UA 144/96, 13 June 1996, AMR 41/27/96).

In 1998, an Amnesty International delegation was initially denied access to General Gallardo, who was at the time in a military prison. After the delegation was finally granted access, the General's cell was raided and various Amnesty documents, including letters from appeal writers were confiscated. In March 2001, another delegation led by former Secretary General, Pierre Sané was allowed to visit General Gallardo in his current prison.

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

- calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of Brigadier General José Francisco Gallardo Rodríguez;
- expressing concern at the decision to transfer General Gallardo to a punishment cell in the Bordo de Xochiaca prison on 28 August;
- expressing concern that the transfer appears to be in reprisal for comments made by General Gallardo to the media about alleged illegal activities of military intelligence units;
- calling for an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding the transfer and for the results to be made public;
- calling on the authorities to comply with the Inter American Commission on Human Rights recommendation to immediately release General Gallardo.

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

Minister of National Defence

Gral. Gerardo Clemente Ricardo Vega García
 Secretario de la Defensa Nacional
 Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional
 Bulevar M. Ávila Camacho esqu. Industria Militar S/N
 Col. Lomas de Sotelo
 Delegación Miguel Hidalgo
 México D.F., C.P. 11640
 MEXICO

Telegrams: Secretario de la Defensa Nacional, Mexico D.F., Mexico

Fax: (+52 5) 557 8963

Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister

Governor of Mexico

Lic. Arturo Montiel Rojas
 Gobernador del Estado de México
 Palacio de Gobierno, 1er Piso
 Lerso No. 300 Poniente, Col. Centro
 Toluca 50000
 Estado de México
 MEXICO

Fax: (+52 72) 14 41 72

Salutation: Dear Governor, Señor Gobernador

Prison Director

Mario de Jesus Eternod Aguilar,
 Director del Penal Neza-Bordo,
 Av. Lopez Mateos, Esq. con Av. Bordo de Xochiaca
 Ciudad de Nezahualcóyotl,
 Estado de México
 MEXICO

Fax: (+52 57) 354490

Salutation: Estimado Director/Dear Director

COPIES TO:**Human rights organization**

Comisión Mexicana de Defensa
 y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
 Tehuantepec 155, Col. Roma Sur
 06760 Mexico 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 11 October 2001.