

UA 326/02

Fear for**MEXICO** Jorge Ignacio Guerra (m)
His family

Jorge Ignacio Guerra, from the town of Querétaro, Querétaro state, was allegedly tortured and threatened by staff assigned to Querétaro's State Governor. Amnesty International believes that Jorge Ignacio Guerra and his family are at risk, after a report into the torture allegations was published on 17 October.

On 26 July, Jorge Ignacio Guerra was arrested by police officers for washing himself in a public fountain in Querétaro. Instead of bringing Jorge Ignacio Guerra to the police station the officers handed him over to the Governor's bodyguards and other staff, who handcuffed him, forced him into a van and brought him to the Josefa Ortiz Domingo Auditorium, *Auditorio Josefa Ortiz Domingo*. Jorge Ignacio Guerra was allegedly blindfolded and beaten repeatedly on the head and on other parts of his body. While they were beating him, one of the men reportedly said, "*Te voy a volver a partir tu madre, y si no entiendes, me voy a ir en contra de tu familia, al fin y al cabo ya la conozco*" ("I'm going to beat you and if you don't get it I'll go for your family, and then you'll definitely get it"). After the attack, Jorge Ignacio Guerra was dumped on the outskirts of the nearby town of San Miguel de Allende. His nose was broken as a result of the torture he suffered.

Jorge Ignacio Guerra filed a complaint with the State Human Rights Commission, *Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos* (CEDH). On 17 October CEDH officially recommended that the Governor of Querétaro should take the necessary steps to investigate the allegations of torture. In response to this recommendation the Governor stated publicly that CEDH was exaggerating and that Jorge Ignacio Guerra was not tortured but only "hit". This demonstrates the unwillingness of Mexican authorities to recognize and tackle the continuing use of torture in a serious way.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Torture and ill-treatment are widespread in Mexico. Amnesty International has also received some reports on torture by state and municipal police forces in Querétaro state. Allegations of torture can only be investigated by the state or federal *Procuradurias* (Prosecutor Services), even though the alleged torturers are often agents of the *Procuradurias* or work closely with them. Witnesses and complainants are thus open to intimidation, and the torturers almost always escape prosecution.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Jorge Ignacio Guerra and his family and calling on the authorities to take immediate steps to guarantee his safety and that of his family;
- calling on the authorities to comply with the CEDH recommendation and to conduct an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the reports that Ignacio Guerra was tortured, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- reminding the authorities of their obligation to comply with the article 13 of the Torture Convention: "Each State Party shall ensure that any individual who alleges he has been subjected to torture in any territory under its jurisdiction has the right to complain to, and to have his case promptly and impartially examined under its jurisdiction has the right to complain to, and

to have his case promptly and impartially examined by its competent authorities. Steps shall be taken to ensure that the complainant and witnesses are protected against all ill-treatment or intimidation as a consequence of his complaint or any evidence given”;

- urging the authorities to publicly recognise the invaluable human rights work of the State Human Rights Commission, *Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos* (CEDH) and urge them to refrain from making unfounded criticisms against the institution and its President.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Querétaro

Ing. Ignacio Loyola Vera
Gobernador del Estado de Querétaro
Palacio de la Corregidora
Pasteur y 5 de Mayo
Querétaro 76000
Estado de Querétaro
MEXICO

Telegrams:Governor, State of Queretaro, Mexico

Fax:+ 52 442 214 2929

Salutation:Dear Governor/Señor Gobernador

State Attorney General

Lic. Juan Martín Granados Torres
Procurador del Estado de Querétaro
Avenida Ignacio Zaragoza
esq. Melchor Ocampo
Col. Centro
Querétaro 76000
Estado de Querétaro
MÉXICO

Telegrams:State Attorney, State of Queretaro, Mexico

Fax:+ 52 442 224 1135

Salutation:Dear Attorney/ Señor Procurador

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Santiago Creel
Secretario de Gobernación
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez
Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P.06600
MEXICO

Telegrams:Secretario de Gobernacion, Mexico D.F., Mexico

Fax: + 52 5 703 2171 / 546 5350

Salutation:Señor Secretario / Dear Minister

President of the National Commission of Human Rights

Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández
Presidente de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH)
Periférico Sur 3469, 5o piso
Col. San Jerónimo Lídice
México D.F. 10200
MÉXICO

Telegrams:Presidente de la CNDH, Mexico D.F., MEXICO

Faxes:+ 52 555 135 0595 / 681 7199 / 668 0767

Salutation: Estimado Sr. Presidente / Dear President

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" A.C.

Serapio Rendon 57-B

Col. San Rafael, 06470

México D.F. MEXICO

Fax: + 52 55 535 6892

Human Rights Commission of Querétaro

Lic. Bernardo Romero Vázquez

Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Querétaro

Calle Colón N° 14

Col. Centro

76000, Querétaro, Qro.

MÉXICO

Fax: + 52 442 214 0837 (if someone answers, please say 'me da tono de fax, por favor')

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 16 December 2002.