

URGENT ACTION

STOP ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE BY MEXICAN NAVY

A man illegally detained by Mexican marines on 3 August has not been seen since. Navy officials deny detaining him. He is the fourth person to be subjected to apparent enforced disappearance by marines in or near the border city of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas state, since 29 July.

According to eyewitnesses, 33-year-old **Armando del Bosque Villarreal** was driving his car in the town of Colombia, Nuevo León state, which is a few minutes from Nuevo Laredo, when marines stopped his car, dragged him out of his vehicle, handcuffed him and took him away in a military vehicle. Two local municipal police officers were also present during his arrest. They took Armando del Bosque to the Navy's provisional compound on the outskirts of town. Armando del Bosque's father went to the compound a few minutes later where a captain informed him that his son had been arrested and that he was being questioned. The captain promised to update him on his son's situation as it developed.

An hour later, the officer met Armando's father again. The captain denied that Armando del Bosque had been arrested and refused to provide any further information. Naval officials have provided further contradictory accounts; one claiming Armando del Bosque was last seen driving to Nuevo Laredo, another that he had escaped whilst being arrested. Neither of these claims can be supported by eyewitness accounts.

Armando del Bosque has not been seen since his detention. Relatives, supported by the statements of four eyewitnesses, filed a complaint with the Federal Attorney General's Office and the National Human Rights Commission. There is no evidence that an effective search for Armando del Bosque or an investigation into his apparent enforced disappearance has been conducted.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to reveal Armando del Bosque Villarreal's whereabouts and ensure his safety;
- Calling on the civilian authorities to carry out a prompt, full and impartial investigation into his apparent disappearance by members of the Mexican Navy, publish its findings and bring those responsible to justice;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that relatives and witnesses receive protection in line with their wishes, and ensure that all agencies cooperate with civilian investigations and measures to locate the victim;
- Asking them to send out a clear message so that no further enforced disappearances will be tolerated and that all those responsible will be brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 SEPTEMBER 2013 TO:

President of the Republic

Enrique Peña Nieto
Residencia Oficial de los Pinos
Casa Miguel Alemán, Col. San Miguel
Chapultepec, C.P. 11850,
Mexico City, Mexico
Fax: +52 55 5093 4901
Email: enrique.penanieto@presidencia.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear President / Estimado Señor Presidente

Federal Attorney General

Jesús Murillo Karam
Procuraduría General de la República
Paseo de la reforma 211-213
Col. Cuauhtémoc, C.P. 06500
Mexico City, Mexico
Fax: +52 55 5346 0908
Email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Attorney General / Estimado Señor Procurador

And copies to:

NGO

Comité de Derechos Humanos de Nuevo Laredo
Calle Enriqueta Castañeda #8836
Col. La Joya
Nuevo Laredo C.P. 88125
Tamaulipas, Mexico

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The number of people who have disappeared in Mexico - whether abducted by criminal gangs or subjected to enforced disappearance by public officials – has grown substantially since December 2006 when the then federal authorities launched a large-scale policing operation, involving the deployment of the military, to combat organized crime. In February 2013, the current government, led by President Enrique Peña Nieto, published a list of more than 26,000 people who had been reported missing since 2006. The government has failed to provide any further information on the whereabouts of these people.

Amnesty International has documented at least 152 people who have disappeared since 2007. In at least 85 of these cases there is sufficient evidence of the involvement of public officials to make them enforced disappearances under international law. Mexico's National Human Rights Commission acknowledged in June 2013 that it had 2,400 cases of disappearances in which public officials were implicated.

The apparent enforced disappearance of Armando del Bosque Villarreal is the fourth of its kind in or near Nuevo Laredo since 29 July 2013 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/048/2013/en>). Mexican marines were also responsible for the enforced disappearance of six men in the same region in June 2011 (<http://www.amnesty.org/es/library/info/AMR41/044/2011/es>). The National Human Rights Commission has documented this case and recommended a full investigation. In all of these cases, however, the whereabouts of the victims remain unknown and the perpetrators have never been held to account.

The government of President Peña Nieto has partly recognised the gravity of the situation, but not the scale of involvement of public officials in enforced disappearances and the consistent failure to conduct proper investigations. Many state governments are still in complete denial.

In only two cases of enforced disappearance have those responsible been brought to justice since 2006. Prevailing impunity in all other cases puts further people at risk and leaves the fate and whereabouts of thousands of victims unknown.

In May 2013 the Federal Attorney General established the Specialized Search Unit for Disappeared People (*Unidad Especializada de Búsqueda de Personas Desaparecidas*) and initially staffed it with 12 prosecutors. It is possible that hundreds of cases have already been allocated to this unit but it is unclear whether it has been equipped with the necessary resources to carry out its tasks. The Federal Attorney General and the 32 State Attorney Generals have adopted common procedures for handling cases of people who have gone missing or been subjected to enforced disappearance, but these have not been made public, widely applied or assessed.

These are as yet small-scale and isolated measures which do not adequately address the systemic failure of federal and state authorities to respect the rights of victims to truth, justice and reparation. They are also insufficient to clarify the direct or indirect involvement of public officials in enforced disappearances.

Amnesty International's latest report on this issue, *Confronting a nightmare. Disappearances in Mexico*, was published on 4 June 2013 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/mexico-relatives-disappeared-deserve-more-promises-2013-06-04>). Web actions for this campaign are available here: <http://www.alzatuvoz.org/hastaencontrarles/>, <http://alzatuvoz.org/marina/> (in Spanish only).

Name: Armando del Bosque Villarreal

Gender m/f: m

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