

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/64/97

UA 240/97

Fear for safety/prison conditions

28 July 1997

**MEXICO Eleazar García Trujillo; Agapito Hernández Esparza; Rolando Arredondo Alanis; Juan Hernández López, and scores of others**

---

Amnesty International is seriously concerned about the safety and medical condition of scores of prisoners held in a Mexican prison, *Centro de Readaptación Social* (CERESO), Social Readaptation Centre, Apodaco, in the State of Nuevo León.

This follows the violent clampdown, on 25 June 1997, by more than 400 members of the security forces, of a prisoners' protest, involving some 30 prisoners, to protest against human rights violations by the prison authorities. More than 100 prisoners were reportedly injured, some seriously, including those mentioned above. While some of the most seriously injured have received emergency medical treatment, the majority have had no access to adequate medical care. The latest information received by the organization indicates that the health condition of many of these is deteriorating and that proper medical care is unavailable in the prison.

Following this the prison authorities have disallowed visits to prisoners from relatives, health professionals and independent observers. Even members of the State Congress have been prevented entry.

Furthermore, state officials have publicly and unfoundedly accused local human rights advocates calling for improvements in prison conditions in Apodaca of criminal activities. They particularly singled out the non-governmental organization, *Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos, A.C.* (CADHAC), Citizens Support for Human Rights. CADHAC has a long-standing and respected reputation for its work on human rights issues in Nuevo León and its members have been subject in the past to death threats and attacks.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On 25 April, CADHAC published the results of an investigation, authorized by state authorities, into the situation at CERESO, Apodaca, following reports of deteriorating conditions and increased human rights violations against prisoners. The research included in-depth interviews with prisoners and inspection of the facilities according to national and international standards relating to prison conditions and the treatment of prisoners. They documented a series of abuses of the relevant standards and a pattern of human rights violations, including torture. They also called upon the authorities to adopt effective measures to improve the increasingly intolerable conditions in which the prisoners lived.

Despite the recommendations made by CADHAC and echoed by Governmental human rights offices, including the National Human Rights Commission, and members of the state Congress, the prison authorities have failed to implement the urgently needed reforms. This includes providing access to proper medical care to all prisoners and bringing to justice those warders responsible for human rights violations.

Amnesty International is therefore urging the Nuevo León State authorities to ensure an effective end to human rights violations in the CERESO, Apodaca, and asking that all prisoners be offered immediate and adequate medical care and access to relatives and independent observers.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing deep concern about reports that inmates in the CERESO, Apodaca, Nuevo León, have been denied access to proper health care, including scores of those who suffered injuries during the quelling of protests on 25 and 26 June;
- expressing deep concern about reports of persistent and worsening human rights violations, including torture of prisoners, by warders in the CERESO, Apodaca, calling for immediate and effective investigations and for those responsible to be suspended pending investigation and brought to justice if found guilty;
- expressing serious concern about the denial of access of relatives and independent observers to prisoners in Apodaca and calling for such access to be granted, in accordance with Mexican law and relevant international standards;
- expressing concern regarding unfounded allegations released to the media by state officials against human rights defenders advocating an improvement of prison conditions in the CERESO, Apodaca, particularly CADHAC, given that these may lead to threats and attacks such as those suffered in the past.

**APPEALS TO:**

State Governor  
Mr Governor/Sr. Gobernador  
Lic. Sócrates Rizzo García  
Gobernador del Estado de Nuevo León  
Palacio de Gobierno  
Monterrey, Nuevo León  
México

**Telegrams: State Governor, Nuevo León, Mexico.**

**Fax: + 52 8 343 42 34/343 76 67**

**Salutation: Dear Mr. Governor**

**COPIES TO:**

Non-Governmental Human Rights Organization  
CADHAC  
Padre Miller 617 PTE  
64000 Monterrey  
Nuevo León  
México

**Fax: + 52 8 343 66 18**

**E-Mail: cadhac@intercable.net**

International NGO  
Penal Reform International  
169 Clapham Road  
LONDON  
SW9 0PU  
United Kingdom  
**Fax: 44 171 735 4666**

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 September 1997.