

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/114/97

UA 394/97

Fear for safety / Torture

16 December 1997

MEXICO14 street children in Mexico City

On 7 December 1997, 14 street children were beaten and threatened with death by two police agents and two civilians, in the Observatorio area of Mexico City. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for their safety, fearing that they could be subjected to further attacks and intimidation after reporting their ordeal to a local non-governmental human rights organisation.

According to reports, the four men entered an abandoned house where the children were sleeping and proceeded to beat and kick them. They then forced the children out of the building whilst they set light to their belongings, including clothes and mattresses. Some of the children noticed a jeep parked nearby but were ordered, at gunpoint, to look away in order to prevent them from identifying the vehicle. The police warned them that if they attempted to look at it they would be shot dead.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Street children in Mexico City are often subjected to ill-treatment and human rights violations by members of the security forces. Since the beginning of the year, Amnesty International has documented a steady increase in the number of these cases reported (see UA 182/97, AMR 41/46/97, 19 June 1997). However, many cases are not reported, as the street children often fear that their complaints will result in further abuses.

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

- calling for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety of the 14 street children in Mexico City, beaten and threatened by four men, including two police agents on 7 December 1997;
- urging an immediate investigation be carried out into the attack and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern at the increase of human rights violations committed by members of the security forces against street children in Mexico City.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General of the Federal District
Dr. Samuel del Villar
Procurador de Justicia del Distrito Federal
Procuraduría de Justicia del Distrito Federal
Paseo de la Reforma 75
06200 México D.F., MEXICO

Telegrams: Procurador Distrito Federal, México D.F., México
Faxes: + 52 5 625 7129 (fax tone follows recorded message)
Salutation: Sr. Procurador del D.F. / Dear Attorney

COPIES TO:

Human rights organisation
Centro de Derechos Humanos
"Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" A.C.
Puebla No. 153
Col. Roma, 06700
México D.F., 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 27 January 1998.