

PERU

@La Cantuta killings and other human rights violations not yet fully investigated

Amnesty International issued a statement on 25 February 1994 expressing concern that the accusations against military officers and a government official of having been implicated in the July 1992 killing of nine students and a lecturer from La Cantuta University, and the subsequent cover-up of the killing, have not been thoroughly investigated by an independent judicial tribunal.¹

The full text of the statement follows:

"Amnesty International is profoundly dismayed that the case against the military officers and a government official implicated in the La Cantuta killings and the subsequent cover-up has not been investigated by an independent judicial authority. According to allegations made by dissident military officers, at least 20 members of the military plus one government official were implicated in the killings, but Amnesty International has learned instead that only nine officers were brought to trial before a secret military court [2]. They received prison sentences ranging between one and 20 years.

According to allegations made by dissident military officers in April and May 1993, a "special detachment" within the *Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército*, SIE, Peruvian Army Intelligence Service, operating under the orders of a senior government official and high-ranking members of the armed forces, was responsible for the massacre of nine students and a lecturer from La Cantuta University in July 1992. The alleged existence of such a "special detachment" within the SIE has not been investigated by an independent judicial authority.

¹ See: [Peru: Officers and government official implicated in La Cantuta case not yet investigated by independent tribunal](#), AI Index: AMR 46/WU 02/1994, February 1994. For further information see: [Peru: Army officers charged with murdering La Cantuta University lecturer and students](#), AI Index: AMR 46/01/94, January 1994; and [Peru: La Cantuta case to be heard by military tribunal](#), AI Index: AMR 46/WU 01/1994, February 1994.

² In the Amnesty International statement, released on 25 February 1994, two separate phrases were omitted from this sentence, thereby rendering incorrect the facts contained in it. The full sentence (with the two omitted phrases underlined) should have read as follows: "According to allegations made by dissident military officers and Peruvian human rights defenders, at least 20 members of the military plus one government official were implicated in the killings, but Amnesty International has learned instead that only nine officers were brought to trial before a secret military court and convicted." The organization apologizes for the omissions.

In addition, the dissident officers accused the special detachment of being implicated in two further cases of human rights violations: the massacre of some 15 men, women in the Barrios Altos neighbourhood of Lima in November 1991; and the extrajudicial execution of at least 26 students from the *Universidad del Centro*, University of Central Peru, in the city of Huancayo, during 1992 and 1993. According to recent reports, members of this "special detachment" were also responsible for the "disappearance" of nine peasants from three villages in Santa province in May 1992, and for the extrajudicial execution of the journalist Pedro Herminio Yauri in June 1992. None of these allegations have been adequately investigated by the government nor have the perpetrators been brought to justice.

Amnesty International has documented at least 5000 cases of "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution since early 1983. The organization once again calls on the Peruvian authorities to ensure that all officials, members of the security forces and those assisting them who have been implicated in ordering, planning or conducting these abductions and killings be fully investigated by an independent judicial authority. The organization believes that military tribunals in Peru have neither the competence, impartiality, nor independence necessary to investigate and bring to justice members of the security forces accused of human rights violations. An effective response to Amnesty International's call by the Peruvian Government would send a message to Peruvians and the international community that Peru is complying with the requirements enshrined in international human rights standards to which it is party.

Amnesty International reiterates its unequivocal condemnation of grave human rights abuses by armed opposition groups in Peru. These include the execution of people held by such groups; deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, and killings of the security forces who are hors de combat, or who have been incapacitated, have surrendered or been taken prisoner by these groups. Nevertheless, such abuses can never justify violations by the authorities of fundamental human rights."

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