

UA 138/00

Torture/F

PERU Fabián Salazar Olivares, journalist
His family

Journalist Fabián Salazar Olivares has been beaten up and tortured after uncovering evidence of corruption in Peru's presidential elections.

President Alberto Fujimori won the first round of elections on 9 April, amid allegations of fraud. The second round is due to take place on 28 May.

The elections are overseen by the *Jurado Nacional de Elecciones* (JNE), National Electoral Tribunal. On 24 May, journalist Fabián Salazar Olivares was given computer disks, folders and video tapes apparently showing the president of the JNE going into the headquarters of the *Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional* (SIN), National Intelligence Service. The SIN has been accused throughout electoral process of intimidating those who oppose President Fujimori. The tapes also showed several tabloid journalists and an opinion poll company executive in meetings with SIN chief Vladimiro Montesinos.

Fabián Salazar Olivares phoned his assistant and arranged to hand over the material to the leader of the Organization of American States (OAS) mission monitoring the elections, Eduardo Stein.

Shortly afterwards, four men burst into his office, in the capital, Lima, and demanded the tapes, documents and disks. They said they were from the *Superintendencia Nacional de Administración Tributaria* (SUNAT), Inland Revenue Office.

The men, who according to Fabián Salazar Olivares looked like soldiers, tied him to a chair with tape, gagged and blindfolded him. They searched the office and demanded to know where he had got the material. When he refused to answer, they beat him and began cutting his wrist with a saw. They then tried to set fire to the office using documents and tapes. They apparently tried to throw Fabián Salazar Olivares out of the window, but had to leave when they were disturbed by people from neighbouring offices and security guards who had called the fire brigade.

Fabián Salazar Olivares says he is afraid for his family, and told the press from Lima's San Felipe hospital, where he is being treated, that he has been under constant surveillance by SIN agents, and that he had previously been harassed, threatened and beaten up.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

President Fujimori won over 49% of the votes cast in the first round of the election, but not the 51% necessary to win outright. National and international electoral monitoring bodies, as well as human rights organizations, have been seriously concerned that the election was not fairly run. The runner-up, Alejandro Toledo, has pulled out of the forthcoming second round because it appears it will be no fairer than the first.

The JNE has officially announced that the elections will be held on 28 May as scheduled despite electoral observers' demands that it be postponed. The OAS mission, and other national and international observers to the Peruvian elections, have declared that they will not observe the second round because the electoral process is neither free nor fair.

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

- expressing concern that journalist Fabián Salazar Olivares was reportedly tortured after he received material which purported to reveal corruption in the presidential election;
- asking that all necessary steps be taken to guarantee his and his family's safety;
- requesting a prompt and effective investigation into the torture of Fabián Salazar Olivares, that the findings be published and those responsible be brought to justice, and that Fabián Salazar Olivares receives adequate compensation;
- urging the authorities to ensure that human rights are protected at all times during and after the elections .

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister

Señor Alberto Bustamante Belaúnde
Primer Ministro
Palacio de Gobierno
Plaza Mayor
Lima 1, PERU

Fax:+ 511 447 1628

Salutation:Dear Prime Minister/Sr. Primer Ministro

Minister of the Interior and Police

General César Enrique Saucedo
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Plaza 30 de Agosto s/n
Urb. Córpac
San Isidro
Lima 27, PERU

Fax: + 511 224 2405 /+511 475 3419

Salutation:Dear Minister/ Sr. Ministro

Minister of Defense

General EP Carlos Alberto Bergaminos Cruz
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Av. Arequipa 291
Lima 1, PERÚ

Fax: + 511 433 6906

Salutation:Dear Minister/Sr. Ministro

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization

Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos
Jr. Túpac Amaru 2467
Lince
Lima 14, PERU

Tel/fax: + 51 1 441 1533 (if voice, ask "me da tono de fax, por favor")

Fax: + 51 1 422 4827

and to diplomatic representatives of Peru accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 July 2000.