

PERUGeneral Rodolfo ROBLES ESPINOZA, retired army officer

Amnesty International is seriously concerned about the arbitrary detention on 26 November 1996 of dissident retired army general Rodolfo Robles Espinoza. The organization considers General Robles to be a prisoner of conscience and fears for his safety in detention.

During the morning of 26 November General Rodolfo Robles Espinoza was detained near his home in Lima, the capital, and conducted to a military prison in the *Cuartel Real Felipe*, Real Felipe Barracks, in the port town of Callao, near Lima. According to witnesses, General Robles was ill-treated and sprayed with a gas while being forced into a vehicle.

According to *Oficio No.2801-V.I.CSJM.2S*, Official Document No.2801-V.I.CSJM.2S, issued by the *Consejo Supremo de Justicia Militar*, Supreme Council of Military Justice, dated 26 November 1996, General Robles has been charged with "*los delitos de Ultraje a las Fuerzas Armadas y otros*", "the crimes of Insulting the Armed Forces and other [military offences]".

General Robles' detention follows public statements he made during the course of last week, in which he attributed responsibility for a recent bomb attack on a television channel to the *Grupo Colina*, Colina Group, linked to Peru's military intelligence services. It is this same group which General Robles previously held responsible for the summary execution of 10 students and one professor from the University of La Cantuta (see below), and other human rights violations (see Peru: La Cantuta killings and other human rights violations not yet fully investigated, AMR 46/03/94, March 1994).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 5 May 1993 General Robles made public a written statement, in which he accused a "*destacamento especial*", "special detachment", within the *Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército*, Army Intelligence Service, of having abducted and killed one professor and 10 students from La Cantuta University in July 1992. Immediately prior to making his statement public, General Robles sought refuge in a foreign embassy and subsequently flew to Argentina. Prior to his departure, General Robles was threatened by telephone that he would be killed.

While in exile a military court charged him with insubordination, disobedience and other military offences. These charges hinged on General Robles' public accusations relating to the La Cantuta University case.

General Robles returned to Peru on 16 June 1995, the day after President Alberto Fujimori promulgated an amnesty law, which closed all investigations and judicial proceedings linked to past human rights violations. Since 1983 these have included thousands of cases of alleged "disappearance", extrajudicial execution, and torture, the vast majority of which have never been resolved.

The amnesty law also rendered ineffective those few sentences handed down for such crimes. For example, the law brought about the immediate release of those officers sentenced to prison terms for their part in the killings at La Cantuta University.

General Robles returned to his country in the belief that the amnesty law also covered the charges against him, and since his return he has asked to be

reinstated in the army. General Robles has also been an outspoken defender of Peruvian human rights organizations and a critic of human rights violations in Peru. In an article published by the Peruvian magazine *Caretas* on 22 June 1995, he wrote: "*En el destierro, he comprobado cómo se sataniza a los organismos de DDHH, por su admirable labor en defensa de las víctimas de las violaciones de los DDHH*", "In exile I have realised how human rights organizations have been vilified because of their admirable work in defending the victims of human rights violations".

In 1995, General Robles received death threats against himself and his family (see UA 146/95 (AMR 46/10/95, 23 June 1995) and follow-up (AMR 46/21/95, 3 October 1995).

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

- expressing concern about the arbitrary detention of General Rodolfo Robles Espinoza;
- urging that he be treated humanely at all times while in custody;
- stating that Amnesty international considers him to be a prisoner of conscience, and calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

APPEALS TO:

President Alberto Fujimori
 Presidente de la República del Perú
 Palacio de Gobierno
 Plaza de Armas
 Lima 1, PERU
Fax: +51 1 426 6770
Telex: 20167 pe palacio; 20331 pe sec pre
Telegrams: President Fujimori, Lima, Peru
Salutation: Sr Presidente / Dear President

General Nicolás de Bari Hermoza Ríos
 Presidente del Comando Conjunto de las Fuerzas Armadas
 291 Avenida Arequipa
 Lima, Peru
Telegrams: Pres. del Comando Conjunto Fuerzas Armadas, Lima, Peru
Salutation: Sr General / Dear General

COPIES TO:

Asociación pro Derechos Humanos (APRODEH)
 Jr. Pachacutec 980
 Lima 11, PERU

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 31 December 1996.