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PERU: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DECLARES DISSIDENT ARMY GENERAL TO BE PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

The Peruvian Government should immediately release Rodolfo Robles Espinoza -- a retired army general -- who was detained yesterday for the military crime of "insulting the Armed Forces", Amnesty International said today.

"It is appalling that the Peruvian authorities have detained General Robles simply for criticising the armed forces. He is a prisoner of conscience and should never have been arrested in the first place," the human rights organization said.

General Robles was detained on 26 November and is currently being held at the Real Felipe military barracks in Callao, near Lima, the capital. The detention follows public statements made last week by General Robles, in which he attributed responsibility for a recent bomb attack on a television channel to members of Peru's military security services.

General Robles came to international attention in May 1993 when he publicly accused army members within the intelligence services of being responsible for the summary execution, in July 1992, of 10 students and one professor from La Cantuta University.

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