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@ "DISAPPEARANCE" AND TORTURE OF 'LA CANTUTA' STUDENT

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Further to AI document "'Disappearance' of a Lecturer and Nine Students", (AMR 46/45/92, September 1992), which dealt with human rights violations at the Universidad de Educación Enrique Guzmán y Valle (Also known as La Cantuta) in Lima, Amnesty International has learnt of the unacknowledged detention of three more students, allegedly by members of the military intelligence. Two of them reappeared after a few days, but the third one, Nancy Luz Pimentel Cuéllar, was held in captivity for 22 days, without her detention being acknowledged. According to her testimony, she was subjected to severe torture by members of the security forces, who accused her of being involved with the Partido Comunista del Perú, PCP, (*Sendero Luminoso*), Communist Party of Perú (Shining Path). Nancy Pimentel was subsequently released without her detention having been recognized and without her having been brought before a competent court.

The following are extracts from the testimony of Nancy Pimentel who, according to several witnesses, was detained at her home in the early hours of 10 October by eight members of the armed forces:

"What is your name?" one of the soldiers who was hooded and dressed in plain clothes asked me.

- "Nancy", I replied.

- "Where are the leaflets?, where are the guns?", he asked again.

I replied that I didn't have any of those things and that I didn't know what he was talking about. My son started to cry and they moved me to another room with my 76-year-old grandmother and forced us to lie on the floor. They covered my mouth with a piece of clothing, and they tied my hands and lifted them above my head. (Yo les contesté que no tenía nada de eso ni sabía de qué me estaban hablando. Mi hijo empezó a gritar y nuevamente me sacaron y me metieron a otro cuarto con mi abuelita de 76 años e hicieron que nos tiráramos al piso).

- "Speak out bloody terrorist, speak out" (Habla terruca de mierda, habla, they shouted at me.

I shouted in pain, but they went on beating me. One of them tied my hands behind my back with a nylon stocking and twisted them while another one trampled on my back. On hearing my cries my relatives complained and asked for help. I heard some shootings. (Yo gritaba de dolor pero ellos seguían pegándose. Uno de ellos me amarró las manos hacia atrás con una media nylon y empezó a torcémela mientras otro me pisaba la espalda. Al escuchar mis gritos mis familiares empezaron a reclamar y a pedir auxilio. Escuché disparos).

Nancy Pimentel says she was then driven blindfolded and hooded to the *Dirección Nacional Terrorismo*, (DINCOTE), the police anti-terrorist unit. She was told that they were taking her to identify someone and that they would take her home soon. She was taken up to the third floor and made to sit on a chair. She was told not to move as she was sitting on the edge of a steep drop.

- *"I was held in this position all night. At dawn I realized that I was in a small room. By the smell it seemed to be a toilet. I called saying I needed to urinate, but nobody answered and only at night was I able to relieve myself. That day I wasn't given anything to eat and at about midnight they came to interrogate me. They asked me about the La Cantuta University people. They said they had seen me entering [their meeting place] several times and that I had taken part in Shining Path discussions. (Así me tuvieron toda la noche. Cuando amaneció, me di cuenta de que estaba en un cuarto pequeño. Por el olor parecía un baño. Yo les llamaba diciendo que quería orinar, pero nadie me constestó. Recién en la noche me sacaron para hacer mis necesidades. Ese día no me dieron de comer y como a media noche vinieron por mí para interrogarme. Empezaron a preguntar sobre los internos de la Universidad de La Cantuta. Ellos aseguraban que me habían visto entrar en varias oportunidades y que había participado en charlas senderistas).*

- *"I know nothing sir, I am being slandered", I told them. (Yo no sé nada señor, me están calumniando, yo les decía)*

- *"This one won't talk willingly, take her to the other room" said a man with a deep voice. (Esta no quiere hablar por las buenas, llévenla al otro cuarto, ordenó un señor de voz gruesa)*

Then they begun to torture me. They untied my hands and put some string around my neck, like a donkey. (Allí empezaron a torturarme. Me soltaron las manos y con un cordón me amarraron el cuello para sujetarme como a un burro).

- *"Speak...say who they are and you can leave now", they told me. (Habla...di quienes son y ahorita te vas-me dijeron).*

- *"I don't know anything, If I knew, I would tell you. I swear I know nothing" - I begged them. (Yo no sé nada, si supiera les diría - les suplicaba).*

Then they applied electricity to my fingertips. Shouting and crying I said that I did not know anything. (En eseo me pusieron electricidad en la punta de los dedos. Yo grité y llorando les decía que no sabía nada).

- *"She does not wish to talk, give her some more...", they said. (Ah,...no quiere hablar, póngale más, insistieron)*

I was kept like this for a long time. They then applied electricity to my head and I fainted. When I woke up, I was on a concrete floor. I was shivering with cold. The day was breaking and, a young soldier came... (Así me tuvieron un buen rato. Luego me pusieron la corriente en la cabeza y me desmayé. Cuando desperté estaba tirada sobre un piso de cemento. Temblaba de frío, estaba amaneciendo y en eso vino un soldadito...)

- "What's wrong?" he asked me (¿Qué tienes? me preguntó)

- "I don't feel well, I would like some water please", I said. (Estoy mal, quiero agua por favor, le dije)

He came over and helped me to drink some water. I spent that whole Monday on the floor, blindfolded, with my hands behind my back. At dawn they took me to another room which had a window. Then they brought in another girl. I noticed her presence by her voice and because, like me, she asked to go to the toilet. I slept several days on the floor, without a blanket, until we were taken to another room where I was given an old mattress to cover myself. I was forbidden to talk to the other girl. We were told that there were microphones and that any conversation could be heard on the other room. She complained more than me; I felt very bad because I had been tortured for three nights in a row. I had received electric shocks, my whole body had been kicked and beaten. They also submerged my head in a tub of water with detergent until near asphyxiation. I was asked about everything... The last night that they interrogated me a man told me he was from DINCOTE. (El se acercó y me hizo tomar agua. Ese lunes estuve todo el día tirada en el piso, con los ojos vendados y las manos amarradas en la espalda. Al amanecer me sacaron y me pusieron en otro cuarto que tenía ventana. Después trajeron a otra chica. Me di cuenta de su presencia por su voz y porque, al igual que yo, pedía ir al baño. Dormí varios días tirada en el piso sin frazadas, hasta que nos pasaron a otro cuarto donde me dieron un colchón viejo para cubrirme. No podía conversar con la otra chica porque nos lo prohibieron. Nos dijeron que había micrófonos y que cualquier conversación se escuchaba en otra oficina. Ella se quejaba más que yo, que estaba muy mal porque nos habían torturado durante tres noches seguidas. Me ponían electricidad, me pateaban y me tiraban puñetes en todo el cuerpo. También me sumergían en una tina de agua con detergente hasta que estaba a punto de asfixiarme. me preguntaban de todo... La última noche que me interrogaron un hombre me dijo que era de la DINCOTE)

- "Sir", I replied, "I have already answered all your questions". (Señor, yo ya contesté todo lo que Ud. me está preguntando)

- "It doesn't matter, I am from DINCOTE, and I don't know what you have told the others. You have to tell me the truth..." (Eso no importa. Yo soy de la DINCOTE y no sé qué le has dicho a ellos. A mí me tienes que contestar la verdad...)

"I was then returned to the room where the girl continued to complain "I am cold" she said, and the soldier who was guarding us took off my anorak to cover her. Sometimes we spoke in a very low voice, but I didn't dare to ask her name. We tried to cheer each other up to stand the hunger and the cold. After the sixth day I was given some beans to eat, but I didn't eat much, because my stomach seemed to have shrunk... The day before I was to be released a gentleman came and said that I was going to be released. (Luego me devolvieron al cuarto donde la chica se quejaba más. 'Tengo frío', decía y el soldado que nos cuidaba me quitó la casaca para cubrirla. A veces hablábamos en voz bajita pero no me atrevía a preguntarle su nombre. Nos dábamos fuerza para seguir adelante y soportar el hambre y el frío. Después del sexto día me hicieron comer un poco de frejoles. Pero comí poco pues parecía que me estómago se había achicado... Faltando un día para que me liberen, se apareció un señor y me dijo que ya iba a salir)

- "You will be released tomorrow, but try not to get involved in subversion. If you get any information, call us". (Mañana te vas, pero trata de no meterte con la subversión. Si tienes alguna información nos llamas)

I asked for a shower because I was stinking. "OK", he said, and gave orders for me to be taken to a shower. The other girl was also told the same, but I don't know if she was actually released." (Yo le pedí una ducha porque estaba apestando. "Está bien" dijo, y ordenó que me llevaran a la ducha. A la otra chica también se le comunicó lo mismo, pero ignoro si en verdad habrá salido)

After an hour or so, some men entered the room. They read out a document which I had to sign and put my fingerprint on. The document stated that at no moment had I been ill-treated and that I left in good health. (Pasó una hora y llegaron unos hombres. Me leyeron un documento el que tenía que firmar e imprimir mi huella dactilar. El documento decía que en ningún momento había sido maltratada y que salía gozando de buena salud)

On 2 November, Nancy Pimentel was driven from her detention place blindfolded and was left in Miraflores, one of the fashionable neighbourhoods of Lima. Amnesty International does not have any information regarding the identity or what happened to the other girl that shared Nancy Pimentel's room.

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