

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 53/14/97

9 October 1997

**Further information on UA 70/97 (AMR 53/01/97, 14 March 1997) and follow-up (AMR 53/07/97, 11 July) - Torture / Fear for safety**

**VENEZUELA**                    **Félix Faría Arias, aged 24, student**

Amnesty International is extremely alarmed that, for the second time this year, Felix Faría Arias has been abducted and tortured. The organization is once again seriously concerned for his safety.

On 7 October 1997, Félix Faría Arias was abducted by unknown individuals wearing hoods as he was walking in the area near the National University in the capital, Caracas. He was dragged into a black Toyota landcruiser, similar to the one used in his previous abduction and torture on 8 March (see original UA). Inside the vehicle, he was hooded, handcuffed and interrogated by alleged members of the *Dirección de los Servicios de Inteligencia y Prevención*, DISIP, Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services. His assailants beat him around the head with the butts of their guns and burned his arms, more than 46 times, with the same sort of cylindrical electrical instrument used in the March attack. They threatened to kill Félix next time they caught him and they also questioned him about why he had raised his case with Amnesty International.

Members of the DISIP have reportedly detained Félix Faría Arias on previous occasions in relation to his political activities. Furthermore, he is one of the witnesses to the killing of university student Belinda Alvarez, who was killed at the University of Caracas on 3 April 1991 by members of the security forces. Félix Faría Arias was wounded in the same incident.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned for the safety of Félix Faría Arias. In a similar case in July 1996, Luis Rafael Escobar Ugas was abducted and tortured. After reporting the incident to the Attorney General he was abducted and tortured once again and was forced to seek refuge in the Costa Rican embassy. He subsequently left Venezuela for his own safety.

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

- expressing alarm about the second abduction and torture of Félix Faría Arias on 7 October 1997 and calling on the authorities to take immediate steps to guarantee his safety, as a matter of extreme urgency;
- requesting the authorities to carry out a full, impartial and prompt investigation of the events of 7 October 1997 and 8 March 1997 and to bring those responsible to justice;
- reminding the Venezuelan Government of its obligations to fully implement the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment which it signed on 15 February 1985.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of the Presidency

Doctor Asdrúbal Aguiar  
Secretaría de la Presidencia  
Palacio de Miraflores  
Caracas, Venezuela

**Faxes: +58 2 861 0793**

**Telegrams: Secretaría de la Presidencia, Caracas, Venezuela**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

Minister of the Interior

Dr. José Guillermo Andueza  
Ministro de Relaciones Interiores  
Esquina de Carmelitas a Santa Capilla  
Av. Urdaneta

Caracas, Venezuela

**Faxes: +582 861 1967**

**Telegrams: Ministro de Relaciones Interiores, Caracas, Venezuela**

**Salutation: Señor Ministro**

Attorney General

Dr. Iván Darío Badell González

Fiscal General de la República

Esquina de Manduca a Ferrenquín,

Caracas, Venezuela

**Telegrams: Fiscal General, Caracas, Venezuela**

**Faxes: + 58 2 564 7461**

**Salutation: Sr. Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General**

Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services

General Aníbal Rivas Ostos

Dirección de los Servicios de Inteligencia

y Prevención (DISIP)

Helicoide Roca Tarpeya

Puente Hierro

Caracas, Venezuela

**Telegrams: DISIP, Caracas, Venezuela**

**Salutation: Sr. General / Dear General**

**COPIES TO:**

University Human Rights Commission

La Comisión Universitaria de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos

Facultad de Derecho

Instituto de Ciencias Penales

Sección Criminología

Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV)

Caracas, Venezuela

and to diplomatic representatives of Venezuela accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 November 1997.