

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 343/94 (AMR 19/19/94, 16 September 1994) - Death threats / Fear for safety

BRAZIL Cesar Gomes Gama, journalist

 José Antônio Moura Bonfim, journalist

 Marcos Cardoso, journalist

 Elenaldo dos Santos Santana, commercial director of paper

Other employees of the CINFORM newspaper in Aracajú, Sergipe State Brazil

new name: Adelmo Peixoto Hora Nunes, military police soldier

Death threats against those named above have intensified, and there is great concern for their safety. There are now also fears for the life of Adelmo Peixoto Hora Nunes, who is thought to have provided the information about "The Mission" (an alleged "extermination group" within the Sergipe military police shock troop (Batalhão de Choque)), on which the journalists based their published reports.

There have been repeated calls for a federal investigation into allegations of the involvement of Sergipe state authorities in the activities of "The Mission". However, the federal authorities have chosen to leave the investigation to Sergipe state police authorities, arguing that they cannot intervene in a state's affairs, particularly during an election period.

Adelmo Peixoto Hora Nunes, a military police soldier, claims to have been a member of "The Mission" and was reportedly CINFORM's original informant about the extermination group. Several hours of his testimony have been recorded on audio and video tape. These have been passed to Amnesty International and to the federal authorities. They contain serious allegations about the involvement of high level state authorities in the activities of the extermination group.

The Federal Minister of Justice has requested that Adelmo Peixoto Hora Nunes be brought to the capital Brasilia to give his testimony in person. However rather than seek a federal police escort for him, the Minister has asked the same military police authorities accused in the soldier's allegations to be responsible for delivering him to Brasília. Adelmo Peixoto Hora Nunes is currently in detention at the Military Police Officer Training School in Aracajú, Sergipe, waiting to be transported to Brasília. He was reportedly sought there by two unidentified men in the last few days.

The journalists from CINFORM remain the target of intense threats to their lives. Following pressure from the federal authorities, the Sergipe state government has assigned a few state civil policemen to protect them. The policemen have given the journalists some bullet proof vests. The journalists themselves have contracted their own personal bodyguards. On 5 October one of the bodyguards was approached by an alleged member of the extermination group and warned to keep away from journalist Cesar Gama if he did not want to be killed as well since "the time is getting very close" ("*a coisa esta chegando na hora*").

Amnesty International is calling for a full investigation into the allegations of the operation of an "extermination group" in Sergipe, and for all those

responsible to be brought to justice.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing serious concern for the safety of military police soldier and witness Adelmo Peixoto Hora Nunes from the state of Sergipe and urging the federal authorities to take concrete steps to guarantee his life and safety and that of his family;
- expressing concern for the lives and physical safety of the journalists (named above, give names in full) and their families, in view of the continued threats against their lives;
- expressing surprise at the continued lack of federal action in this case;
- urging that the allegations about the operation of an extermination group in the state of Sergipe are fully investigated and appropriate measures taken by the federal police to end their activities and bring those responsible to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

Sr. Itamar Franco
Gabinete do Presidente
Palácio do Planalto
70.150 Brasília, DF, BRAZIL

Telegrams: Presidente Franco, Brasilia, Brazil

Faxes: + 55 61 226 7566

Salutation: Your Excellency/Vossa Excelência

Minister of Justice

Sr. Alexandra Dupreyrat
Ministro da Justiça
Ministério da Justiça
Esplando dos Ministérios
Bloco 23

70.064 Brasília DF, BRAZIL

Telegrams: Ministro Dupreyrat, Ministro da Justiça, Brasília, Brazil

Faxes: + 55 61 5145/224 2448

Salutation: Your Excellency/Vossa Excelência

Attorney General

Dr. Aristides Junqueira
Procurador Geral da República
Procuradoria Geral da República
Ed. Sede da PGR
Av. L2 Sul - Q 603 - lote 23
70.200 Brasília DF, BRAZIL

Telegrams: Exmo. Junqueira, Procuradoria Geral da República, Brasilia, Brazil

Faxes: + 55 61 313 5197

Salutation: Your Excellency/Vossa Excelência

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Jornal "CINFORM" (Clasificados e Informações)
Rua Laranjeiras 741
Aracaju
Sergipe, BRAZIL

and to diplomatic representatives of BRAZIL accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 November 1994.