

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Threats

18 September 1992

BRAZIL: Caco BARCELLOS, Journalist

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Caco Barcellos, a Brazilian journalist and author. He has reportedly received death threats from members of the São Paulo military police after publishing a book denouncing extrajudicial executions by members of the military police in the city. The book includes a list of alleged "killers", naming among them a number of military police officers.

On 31 August 1992, during the launch of the book, 15 of those named in the book reportedly threatened Caco Barcellos and guests attending the launch. Later the same day Caco Barcellos was reportedly followed by some of the same men in two police vehicles. Several of the police named in the book reportedly appeared at the São Paulo Biennial Book Fair where Caco Barcellos was apparently told that he was at grave risk because he had annoyed the high command of the military police.

The Secretary of Public Security for São Paulo, responsible for the Military Police, is reported to have summoned members of the military police high command that evening and to have offered Caco Barcellos guarantees for his safety after a video film of the police threatening Caco Barcellos was handed to the authorities.

Given the continued serious risks to Caco Barcellos' life, Amnesty International is calling upon the São Paulo state authorities to take all possible steps to ensure his safety and that of his wife and children.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 31 August 1992 Caco Barcellos launched his book "Rota 66: A historia da Policia que Mata" (Rota 66: The History of the Police that Kill). The book was the result of a seven year study of official documents relating to fatal shootings by the military police over a 22 year period. The book concluded that 57% of people killed had no criminal record and provided a list of alleged "killers", naming a number of military police officers responsible for several fatal shootings.

A significant proportion of the killings in São Paulo have been attributed to death squads or "extermination groups". There is evidence that local police have given support to these groups or even participated in their activities. People who have drawn attention to these activities, publicly denounced them or tried to investigate them have in a number of cases been victims of threats or extrajudicial executions.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Portuguese, French, Spanish, English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of the journalist Caco Barcellos and his family, following alleged death threats and intimidation issued against him by members of the São Paulo military police;

- calling upon the authorities to take the necessary steps to investigate the threats and bring those responsible to justice;

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- urging the authorities to take all possible measures to ensure the safety of Caco Barcellos and that of his family.

APPEALS TO

1) State Governor, São Paulo

Exmo. Sr. Luiz Antonio Fleury
Governador do Estado de São Paulo
Palacio dos Bandeirantes
Av. Morumbi s/n
05.598 São Paulo - SP,
Brasil

Telegrams: Governador Sao Paulo, Brasil

Faxes: +55 11 8439271

Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency

2) State Secretary of Public Security

Sr. Secretário de Segurança Pública
do Estado de São Paulo
Sr. Pedro Franco de Campos
Av. Higienópolis, 758
01/238 São Paulo - SP,
Brasil

Telegrams: Secretário Segurança Pública, São Paulo, SP, Brasil

Telexes: 11 21 521

Faxes: +55 11 825 8813

Salutation: Sr. Secretário / Dear Sir

3) Attorney General

Exmo. Sr. 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
Brasil

Telegrams: Procurador Geral da Republica, Brasilia, Brasil

Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Newspaper:

Folha de Sao Paulo

Alameda Barao de Limeira 425
Campos Elisios
01202 Sao Paulo
Brasil

2) Church Organization:
Comissao Justiça e Paz
Avenida Higienopolis 809
01238 Sao Paulo
Brasil

and to diplomatic representatives of Brazil accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 October 1992.