

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 19/32/96

UA 242/96 Apparent extrajudicial execution / Fear for safety 21 October 1996

BRAZIL Francisco Gilson Nogueira de Carvalho, aged 34, lawyer, human rights defender

Roberto Monte, human rights defender

Luiz Gonzaga Dantas, human rights defender

Unnamed witness

On 20 October 1996 human rights defender Francisco Gilson Nogueira de Carvalho was shot dead on his doorstep in Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, by six men. He was killed by 13 bullets, most of them to the head. Amnesty International believes that he was killed because of his work as a lawyer committed to exposing the involvement of members of the Rio Grande do Norte civil police in "death squad" activities.

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of a witness to the killing, who has come forward, and who is likely to be at risk. Witnesses to other "death squad" crimes in the area have been harassed and threatened.

Amnesty International is also concerned for the safety of Roberto Monte and Luiz Gonzaga Dantas, two of Francisco Gilson Nogueira de Carvalho's colleagues at the *Centro de Direitos Humanos e Memória Popular* (CDHMP), Centre for Human Rights and Collective Memory. The three men received federal police protection for a month and a half in mid-1995 following regular death threats, but this was withdrawn in June 1995.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Francisco Gilson Nogueira de Carvalho was working with a special commission set up by the state attorney general in May 1995 to investigate the activities of a "death squad" which includes off-duty police officers and which allegedly enjoys the protection of the Rio Grande do Norte authorities. The "death squad", known as the *Meninos de Ouro*, Golden Boys, is believed to be responsible for numerous killings, as well as cases of torture and death threats, carried out mainly in the poor neighbourhoods of Natal.

Francisco Gilson Nogueira de Carvalho also represented the families of the victims of the "Mãe Luíza massacre" of 5 March 1995, in which the *Meninos de Ouro* killed two people, including a pregnant woman.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Portuguese or your own language:

- condemning the killing of Francisco Gilson Nogueira de Carvalho as a result of his work as a human rights defender;
- calling upon the federal authorities to assume responsibility for a full and independent investigation into the killing and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern for the safety of the witness to the killing and urging that all necessary steps are taken to guarantee his physical safety;
- expressing concern for the safety of Roberto Monte and Luiz Gonzaga Dantas and other staff of the *Centro de Direitos Humanos e Memória Popular* and urging that all necessary steps are taken to guarantee their physical safety.

APPEALS TO:

When dialling fax numbers, if voice, ask "dar o sinal do fax, por favor"

Minister of Justice

Exmo. Sr. Ministro da Justiça do Brasil
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Salutation: Vossa Excelência/ Your Excellency

Federal Attorney General

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Governor of Rio Grande do Norte

Exmo. Sr. Governador do Rio Grande do Norte
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Rio Grande do Norte State Attorney General

Exmo. Sr. Procurador Geral de Justiça do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte
 Dr. Emmanuel Cristovam de Oliveira Cavalcanti
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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 12 December 1996.