

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

06 January 2004

CHILE

**Rodrigo López Barrera, President of TravesChile of Aconcagua, V Region  
(Transvestites Association)**

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A campaigner for the human rights of transvestites in Chile has reportedly been shot at in the street and received death threats. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for his safety.

Rodrigo López Barrera allegedly received an anonymous telephone death threat on 16 December 2003. Two days later someone fired several shots at him as he was walking on the street in San Felipe, to the west of Santiago, and on 20 December a car followed him. As President of TravesChile of Aconcagua, Rodrigo López has filed complaints and publicly complained of harassment and attacks against the transvestite community in Aconcagua Province, V Region, since April 2002. Legal complaints about the recent attacks against Rodrigo López Barrera have been submitted to the Chilean authorities, but they are not known to have carried out any investigation.

Amnesty International is concerned that the attacks against Rodrigo López are related to his human rights work on behalf of the transvestite community in the area.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Members of sexual minority groups have reportedly been harassed in the Province of Aconcagua, and more than 30 people have reportedly been beaten. Two transvestites have been killed in unexplained circumstances: Vladimir Mario Ibañez Carrasco in April 2002 and Boris Javier Covarrubias in December 2002. While judicial investigations have been opened into the killings, Amnesty International is concerned that the authorities do not appear to adequately investigate reports of these threats and attacks. The organization is also concerned that those who report such human rights violations may face further threats to prevent the complaint from being pursued effectively.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish if fluent, otherwise in English or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Rodrigo López Barrera
- calling on the authorities to take immediate steps to ensure his safety, so that he can continue his legitimate work with TravesChile without fear of harassment;
- calling for a prompt, impartial and conclusive investigation into the threats and attacks that he has been subjected, and for those found responsible to be brought to justice;
- asking for information on the progress of the investigations into the killings of Vladimir Mario Ibañez and Boris Javier Covarrubias.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

National Authorities

Interior Minister

Sr Ministro del Interior

Sr. Jose Miguel Inzulsa

Ministerio del Interior

Palacio de la Moneda

Santiago, Chile

**Telegram:** Ministro del Interior, Santiago, Chile  
**Fax:** + 562 699 21 65  
**Salutation:** Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Minister of Justice  
Sr. Ministro de Justicia  
Sr. Luis Bates  
Ministerio de Justicia  
Morandé 107  
Santiago, Chile

**Telegram:** Ministro Justicia, Santiago, Chile  
**Fax:** +56 2 698 7098 /66952/ 714486  
**Salutation:** Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Provincial Authorities

Governor of Province of Los Andes  
Sr. Gobernador Provincial de los Andes  
Sr. René Canales Páez  
Santa Rosa No. 28  
Los Andes, V Región  
Chile

**Telegram:** Sr. Gobernador, Los Andes, V Region, Chile  
**Fax:** +56 34 422757  
**Salutation:** Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor

Sr. Intendente V Región  
Sr. Luis Guastavino  
Intendencia  
Melgarejo 669 Piso 19  
Valparaíso, V Región  
Chile

**Telegram:** Sr. Intendente, Valparaíso, Chile  
**Fax:** + 56 32 238775  
**Salutation:** Sr. Intendente / Dear Intendent

**COPIES TO:**

Foreign Minister  
Señora Ministra de Relaciones Exteriores  
Sra. Soledad Alvear Valenzuela  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
Catedral 1158, Piso 3  
Santiago, Chile  
**Fax: +56 2 6994202**

Newspaper  
La Tercera  
Vicuña Mackenna 1870  
Santiago, Chile  
**Fax: +56 2 550 7999**

and to diplomatic representatives of Chile accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 February 2004.