

EXTERNAL

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Death Threats

13 June 1997

CHILE Sola SIERRA HENRIQUEZ (f)

Viviana DIAZ CARO (f)

Mariana GUZMAN NUÑEZ (f) -members of the *Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos*, Association of Relatives of "Disappeared" Prisoners

Three members of the non-governmental *Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos*, Association of Relatives of "Disappeared" Prisoners, are reported to have been subjected to anonymous death threats and harassment. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of the three women and their families.

According to reports, on 7 June 1997, two men wearing civilian clothes, who identified themselves as members of the Investigation Police (*Policía de Investigaciones*), came to the home of Mariana Guzmán Nuñez. As she was away, the men indicated to her son that they would return in the evening. That night Mariana Guzmán's son received two anonymous telephone calls insulting his mother and threatening that "we are going to kill that communist so-and-so (*"a esa comunista tal por cual la vamos a matar"*).

A similar message was conveyed to Sola Sierra, President of the *Agrupación*, on the evening of 7 June when an anonymous caller told her "now, we are going to kill you, you communist so-and-so" (*"comunista tal por cual ahora sí que te vamos a matar"*). The following day, 8 June, an unidentified vehicle with two passengers was parked opposite her house for most of the evening.

Viviana Díaz Caro was also threatened by an anonymous caller who insulted her and said "your days are numbered because we are going to kill you" (*"te queda poco porque te vamos a matar"*).

Amnesty International believes that the threats against the women are directly linked to their public human rights work on behalf of the "disappeared". Lawyers representing the three have lodged a legal writ (*Recurso de Protección*) before the Appeals Court in Santiago.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The *Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos* was set up in the early years of the military government of General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990) by relatives of the "disappeared". Over the years they have campaigned for information from the authorities about the whereabouts and fate of their relatives. Since the return of civilian government, governmental agencies have been created to gather information to establish the truth on the "disappeared" cases. Over 1,000 cases of "disappearances" have been officially recognized. However legal efforts to investigate the fate and whereabouts of the "disappeared" have been hampered by the closure of cases by military and civilian courts applying the Amnesty Law of 1978. The *Agrupación* have continued to pursue their goal through national and international legal avenues and peaceful public activities.

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

- expressing concern at the deaths threats against the three members of the *Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos*;
- calling for an immediate investigation into these threats, for the findings to be made public and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- urging that immediate, adequate and appropriate protection be provided to the three women and their families.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente de la República de Chile
Señor Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle
Palacio de la Moneda
Santiago, Chile
Fax: +562 694 5080
Telegrams: Presidente, Santiago, Chile
Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

Minister of Interior

Sr. Ministro del Interior
Sr. Carlos Figueroa Serrano
Ministerio del Interior
Palacio de la Moneda
Santiago, Chile
Fax: +562 696 8740
Telegrams: Ministro Interior, Santiago, Chile
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Minister of Justice

Sra. Maria Soledad Alvear
Ministra de Justicia
Ministerio de Justicia
Morandé 107
Santiago, Chile
Fax: +562 695 4558
Telegrams: Ministra de Justicia, Santiago, Chile
Salutation: Sra. Ministra / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Newspaper

La Nación
Agustinas 1269
Santiago, Chile
Fax +562 698 1059

Human Rights Organization

Agrupación de Familiares de Deenidos Desaparecidos
Manuel Rodriguez 33
Santiago, Chile
Fax: +562 698 8609

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 30 July 1997.