

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 112/03 (AMR 25/016/2003, 24 April 2003) and follow-ups (AMR 25/037/2003, 11 August 2003 and AMR 25/056/2003, 19 November 2003) - Medical concern/ Prisoner of Conscience (POC)

CUBA Oscar Espinosa Chepe (m), aged 64

Oscar Espinosa Chepe was conditionally released on 29 November 2004, his 64th birthday, due to his poor health. He had been suffering from chronic cirrhosis of the liver, inflammation of the stomach, skin cancer, eye disease and high blood pressure. He was granted "*licencia extrapenal*", or permission to serve the rest of his sentence outside prison. He could still be detained at any time.

Oscar Espinosa Chepe was arrested on 18 March 2003 as part of a massive crackdown by the Cuban Government, during which at least 75 dissidents were detained. He was accused of "activities against the integrity and sovereignty of the State", "*actividades contra la integridad y la soberanía del Estado*", by allegedly receiving money from abroad, collecting press cuttings about meetings between representatives from the USA and dissidents and other activities. He served 20 months of his 20-year sentence in prison.

He told Amnesty International that his wife had managed to whisper news of the organization's work on his behalf when she visited him in prison. He thanked Amnesty International members for their support and called for continued campaigning on behalf of other prisoners of conscience in Cuba.

No further action by the UA network is necessary at present. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.