

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 25/26/96

24 May 1996

Further information on UA 85/96 (AMR 25/17/96, 28 March 1996) - Medical Concern / Prisoners of Conscience

CUBARoberto LOPEZ MONTAÑES, 43, member of unofficial group belonging to *Concilio Cubano*, Cuban Concilium
Juan Francisco MONZON OVIEDO, member of the National Coordinating Council of *Concilio Cubano*

Amnesty International continues to be concerned about the health of prisoner of conscience Roberto López Montañes, who is awaiting trial on a charge of "desacato", "disrespect". After reportedly suffering a heart attack only days before his detention on 23 February 1996, he subsequently went on hunger-strike for a few days in protest at his arrest. He is also said to be suffering from asthma, angina and a stomach ulcer. Recent reports indicate that his weight has dropped to just 80 pounds. He remains in Valle Grande Prison, Havana province, where he is said to be held in a special cell for prisoners suffering from malnutrition.

Although such prisoners are reportedly given slightly more food than other prisoners, it is feared that the quantity and quality of the food may still be insufficient for a person in his condition. Amnesty International receives frequent reports that diet and sanitary conditions in many Cuban prisons are very poor, resulting in widespread serious health problems. Despite the presentation of dozens of medical certificates documenting the health problems of Roberto López Montañes, his lawyer has been unable to obtain his release on bail.

Roberto López Montañes is a member of the executive of the *Movimiento Opositor Pacífico "Panchito Gómez Toro"*, Panchito Gómez Toro Peaceful Opposition Movement, and of the *Alianza Democrática Popular*, Popular Democratic Alliance, both unofficial groups belonging to *Concilio Cubano*, Cuban Concilium, a broad coalition of groups opposed to the government.

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of both Roberto López Montañes and Juan Francisco Monzón Oviedo on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression. Juan Francisco Monzón Oviedo, a member of the *Consejo Nacional Coordinador*, National Coordinating Council, of *Concilio Cubano*, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment on a charge of "*asociación ilícita*", "illegal association", following a summary trial on 21 March. He is currently serving his sentence in Guanajay Prison, Havana province.

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

- urging the immediate and unconditional release of Roberto López Montañes and Juan Francisco Monzón Oviedo on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression;
- expressing concern for the state of health of Roberto López Montañes who is said to be suffering from several serious ailments and to have lost considerable weight after going on hunger-strike;

- requesting that as long as he is in detention he be given all necessary medical treatment and an adequate diet as well as immediate access to a lawyer of his choice in accordance with international standards for a fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

1) Attorney-General

Dr Juan Escalona Reguera

Fiscal General de la República

Fiscalía General de la República

San Rafael 3, La Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Fiscal General, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511456 fisge

Faxes: + 53 7 333164

Salutation: Sr Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General

2) Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sr Roberto Robaina González

Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

Calzada No. 360

Vedado, La Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511122 / 511464 / 512950

Faxes: + 53 7 333085 / + 53 7 335261

Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

3) Minister of Justice

Dr Carlos Amat Forés

Ministro de Justicia

Ministerio de Justicia

Calle O # 216, 8vo piso

e/ 23 y Humboldt, Vedado

La Habana, Cuba

Telexes: 511331

Telegrams: Ministro Justicia, Havana, Cuba

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

In the case of Roberto López Montañés:

Señor Director

Prisión de Valle Grande

Carretera El Morado, Km 31½

San Antonio de los Baños

Prov. La Habana, Cuba

In the case of Juan Francisco Monzón Oviedo:

Señor Director

Prisión de Guanajay

Carretera Central, Km 45½

Prov. La Habana, Cuba

and to diplomatic representatives of CUBA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 July 1996.