

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 27/01/99

UA 25/99

Death Threat/ Fear for safety/
Possible extrajudicial execution

16 February 1999

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo and her two children Remberto José Oichardo Juan (25) and Alicia María Pichardo Juan (19)

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo and her two children, Remberto José Pichardo Juan and Alicia María Pichardo Juan, following reports that she has received death threats.

On 9 February 1999 Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo was visited by a high-ranking official of the *Departamento Nacional de Investigaciones (DNI)*, National Department of Investigation. They warned her that the DNI was prepared to kill her children if she went forward with the publication of a book she has written, in which she denounces state corruption in the Dominican Republic.

For the past three years, Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo, former General Prosecutor of the National District of the Dominican Republic (1992-1993), has been investigating state corruption and involvement in drug trafficking. She is reportedly about to publish a book based on her experience as a prosecutor in which she denounces corruption by high ranking government officials, including ex-President Dr. Joaquín Balaguer and Claudio de los Santos who worked for Balaguer for ten years until 1996.

Amnesty International is calling on the Government of the Dominican Republic to take all necessary measures to ensure the physical integrity of Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo and her two children.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1996 Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo filed a citizen's complaint from Miami (USA) against a deputy and special adviser to the President, Anibal Páez, as well as other government officials. She also made a number of statements to the media charging several state officials with corruption and involvement in drug trafficking. Following these denunciations, Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo was temporarily denied access to the Dominican Republic. The officials named in the complaint then filed a criminal suit against her for defamation. She was sentenced *in absentia* (because of ill-health), and her arrest was ordered. In spite of appeals by her lawyers, she was arrested. However, she was released approximately two hours later after a massive press campaign was launched in her favour.

Claudio de los Santos is currently under investigation for his alleged involvement in the "disappearance" in 1994 of journalist Narciso González (see Annual Reports 1995 to 1998) following his public criticism of President Balaguer and the elections.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo and her two children Remberto José Pichardo Juan and Alicia María Pichardo Juan;
- calling for all necessary measures to be taken to guarantee the safety of Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo and her children;
- calling for a thorough and independent investigation into the death threats;
- calling on the government to take all necessary measures to allow Dr. Josefina Juan de Pichardo to carry out her legitimate work.

APPEALS TO:

S.E. Leonel Fernández Reyna
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio Nacional
 Santo Domingo
 Dominican Republic

Telegrams: Presidente, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Telex: 202 0011 secpres

e-mail: *correspondencias@presidencia.gov.do*

Salutation: Su excelencia / Señor Presidente

Sr. Norge Botello(Minister of State of the Interior)
 Secretario de Estado del Interior y la Policía
 Edif. de Oficinas Gubernamentales 3°
 Avda Leopoldo Navarro a esq. México
 Santo Domingo
 Dominican Republic

Telegrams: Secretario del Interior, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Telephone: (001 809) 689 1979

Salutation: Señor Secretario/ Dear Secretary of State

Sr. Eduardo Latorre (Secretary of State)
 Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores
 Avda. Independencia 752
 Santo Domingo
 Dominican Republic

Telegrams: Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Telephone: + 1 809 532 4121

Telex: 326 4192 or 346 0014 secrela

Fax: + 1 809 535 4172

Salutation: Señor Secretario/ Dear Secretary of State

Mariano Germán Mejía (Attorney General)
 Procurador General de la República
 Centro de los Héroes de Constanza
 Santo Domingo
 Dominican Republic

Telegrams: Procurador General, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

telephone: + 1 809 533 3522

fax: + 1 809 532 2906

Salutation: Señor Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

General José Anibal Sanz Jimanián (Chief of Police)
 Jefe de la Policía Nacional
 Cuartel General Leopoldo Navarro
 Santo Domingo
 Dominican Republic

and to diplomatic representatives of Dominican Republic accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 March 1999.