

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Threats, Torture and Harassment

29 January 1993

ECUADOR

José Ignacio CHAUVIN

Amnesty International is concerned about the reported death threats and torture and harassment of José Ignacio Chauvin by members of the police during January 1993 in Quito, the capital.

According to reports, José Ignacio Chauvin, a 17-year-old schoolboy, was detained in Quito, after leaving a poetry recital commemorating the fifth anniversary of the "disappearance" of the Restrepo brothers (See *Amnesty International Annual Report 1992*). He was reportedly detained and hooded by some six people in plain clothes, who forced him inside a van where he was kicked, beaten and had electricity applied to his genitals with an instrument that discharges electrical impulses. He fell unconscious and came round when some water was thrown over him. Another man dressed in civilian clothes then reportedly entered the van and beat him further with a kind of glove containing crushed glass which caused him numerous wounds on his hands, chest, head and stomach. This man also threatened to throw José Ignacio Chauvin from a foot-bridge. Finally a uniformed police officer entered the van and gave orders to stop beating him. José Ignacio Chauvin was then left on the street.

The death threats and torture were denounced to a local human rights organization, to the Tribunal de Garantías Constitucionales (Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees) and to Roberto Dunn Barreiro, Minister of Government and Police. The latter is reported to have stated to the press that the denunciation of torture inside a police van was fantasy.

According to reports, the following day, while José Ignacio Chauvin was in his home in Quito, an unidentified person shouted at him through an open window: "I am going to kill you, you son of a bitch".

As a result of the above events, José Ignacio Chauvin went to stay with relatives in Loja province. On the night of 22 and 23 January he noticed a blue vehicle without number plates and tinted windows parked in front of the house.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since the publication of an official report in September 1991 into the 1988 "disappearance" of the Restrepo brothers, which concluded that a branch of the National Police was responsible for the brothers' "disappearance", there have been weekly vigils in a public square in Quito as part of a campaign to ensure those responsible be brought to trial and convicted.

Judicial proceedings were initiated in 1991 against a number of police officers accused of involvement in the "disappearance". However, a fear by many people

that the judicial proceedings may end in some or all of those accused being absolved of responsibility for the crime, have resulted in the campaign being maintained. As a result, those participating in the weekly vigil and events connected with them, have allegedly come under surveillance by the authorities.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Please send telegrams/telexes and airmail letters either in Spanish, English or in your own language:

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- expressing concern at the reported death threats, torture and harassment by the security forces of 17-year-old José Ignacio Chauvin;

- asking for a full and independent inquiry into the allegations of torture, that the findings of the inquiry be made public and, should the allegations be sustained, that those responsible be brought to justice.

- asking for guarantees for the personal security of José Ignacio Chauvin

APPEALS TO:

1) President of Ecuador

Durán Sr Presidente Sixto Durán Ballén

Presidente de la República
del Ecuador
Palacio de Gobierno
García Moreno 1043
Quito
ECUADOR

Telexes: 22375/22201 prrep ed

Salutation: Sr. Presidente/ Dear Dr. Sixto

2) Minister of the Government and Police

Sr. Ministro Roberto Dunn Barreiro
Ministro de Gobierno y Policía
Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía
Espejo y Benalcázar
Quito
ECUADOR

Telexes: 22354 mingob ed

Salutation: Sr. Ministro Roberto Dunn Barreiro / Dear Minister

3) Minister of Foreign Relations

Dr. Diego Ruben Paredes Peña
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
10 de Agosto y Carrión
Quito
ECUADOR

Salutation: Sr Ministro Diego Rubén Paredes Peña / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

(human rights organization)

Comisión Ecuménica de Derechos Humanos
Apartado 720 A
Quito
ECUADOR

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 March 1993.