

PUBLIC

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3 February 2000

Further information on EXTRA 159/99 (AMR 29/06/99, 12 November 1999) - Fear for safety / Death threats/ possible extrajudicial execution

EL SALVADOR William Hernández, director of a non-governmental organization working with sexual minorities

The authorities have apparently refused to provide protection for William Hernández or investigate the death threats he has received. Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

William Hernández is the executive director of the non-governmental organization *Entre Amigos* (Between Friends), which works with sexual minorities and provides sexual health education. The organisation has spoken out about human rights violations against sexual minorities and the failure of the authorities to investigate such abuses.

On 5 November 1999 an anonymous caller rang the *Entre Amigos* office, in the capital, San Salvador, and threatened to come and kill William Hernández, giving an accurate description of him.

Members of *Entre Amigos* reportedly met several times with a sergeant from the *División de Protección a Personalidades Importantes*, Important Persons Protection Unit, of the *Policía Nacional Civil* (PNC), National Civil Police, regarding the threats. However, in January the sergeant reportedly told them that the Attorney General's Office (*Fiscalía General*) had not ordered any official investigation, and that his unit had not been ordered to provide protection. The sergeant also said that none of the officers in the unit were prepared to provide protection to William Hernández, as they did not share his "sexual tastes" (*gustos sexuales*), and he should therefore hire a private security guard.

There have been further reports of attacks on members of sexual minorities. Nestor Adonai Marengo was murdered on 12 December 1999, apparently targeted because he was a known homosexual. Amnesty International is not aware of any progress in the investigation into the killing.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of William Hernández in the light of the authorities' apparent failure to investigate death threats made against him on 5 November 1999 or bring those responsible to justice;
- expressing concern that the authorities have failed to provide William Hernández with the protection he needs;
- reminding the authorities of their legal obligation to investigate threats made against any citizen promptly, fully and impartially, and to take appropriate steps to guarantee their safety;
- expressing grave concern at continuing reports of murders of members of sexual minorities, such as that of Nestor Adonai Marengo on 11 December 1999, and asking to be informed of progress in the official investigation into the murder.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic
S.E. Francisco Flores
Presidente de la República

Casa Presidencial
Avda. Los Diplomáticos,
B° San Jacinto
San Salvador, El Salvador
Telegrams: Presidente, San Salvador, El Salvador
Faxes: + 503 281 0018 / 243 4912
E-mails: presidente@casapres.gob.sv
Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

Minister of Public Security
Dr. Francisco Bertrand Galindo
Ministro de Seguridad Pública
Ministerio de Seguridad Pública
6a. Calle Oriente y 8a. Avenida Sur, No.42
San Salvador, El Salvador
Telegrams: Ministro Seguridad Pública, San Salvador, El Salvador
Fax: + 503 271 2022
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Attorney General
Sr. Belisario Amadeo Artiga
Fiscal General
Fiscalía General de la República
Centro de Gobierno, 5° Piso
San Salvador, El Salvador
Telegrams: Fiscal General, San Salvador, El Salvador
Fax: + 503 225 6171
Salutation: Sr Fiscal General/ Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

William Hernández
Asociación Entre Amigos, Avenida y Colonia Santa Victoria, No.50
Costado Norte Boulevard de los Héroes, San Salvador, El Salvador.
E-mails: entreamigos@salnet.net
Faxes: + 503 225 4213 / 235 1640

National Newspapers
El Diario De Hoy, 11 Calle Oriente, 271, San Salvador, El Salvador
Fax: + 503 271 3329
E-mail: redaccion@elsalvador.com

La Prensa Gráfica, Final Boulevard Sta Elena, Calle Conchagua
Antiguo Cuscatlan, Dpto de la Libertad, San Salvador, El Salvador
Fax: + 503 289 1802/1
E-mail: lpg@laprensa.com.sv

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 March 2000.