

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Disappearance/Health Concern

28 May 1980

EL SALVADOR: Professor Lionel MENENDEZ

Professor Lionel Menendez, one of the leaders of the National Teachers' Association (ANDES), was shot and wounded in a street in San Salvador at 13.00 hours on 21 May 1980. He was subsequently taken to Rosales Hospital where, at 17.45, he was given an anaesthetic in preparation for an operation. Armed men entered the hospital and abducted Professor Menendez from the operating theatre. The hospital had been surrounded by several vehicles belonging to the National Guard as well as agents of the National Police in order to facilitate the abduction of Professor Menendez.

More than 45 teachers have been killed so far this year; there is therefore very grave concern about the safety of Professor Menendez.

In the meantime, doctors in El Salvador have gone on strike in protest against the violation of the independence of the hospitals. The week before the abduction of Professor Menendez two doctors, Doctor Garcia and Doctor Rodriguez, were killed in Cojutepeque, near San Salvador, in the operating theatre of a hospital while they were performing an operation.

Serious violations of human rights continue in El Salvador; it is estimated that some 2,000 people have died so far this year. Arbitrary detentions, "disappearances" and killings of oppositionists or suspected oppositionists persists and violence or threat of violence continue against organisations and individuals that have protested against these human rights violations.

For further background information, please see El Salvador: OAS Testimony (AI Index: AMR 29/13/80, 12 April 1980).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/express letter/letters, requesting clarification of the whereabouts and legal situation of Professor Menendez. Please also express serious concern about the physical well-being of Professor Menendez and ask for assurances that he receive immediate and adequate medical care.

APPEALS TO: Sres. Miembros de la Junta Revolucionaria de Gobierno,
Palacio Nacional, San Salvador, El Salvador.

Coronel José Guillermo García,
Ministro de Defensa,
Ministerio de Defensa, San Salvador, El Salvador

Sr Rodolfo Giron
Ministro de Salud Pública
Ministerio de Salud Pública
Calle Arce 827, San Salvador, El Salvador

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS in particular are asked to appeal to Sr. Rodolfo Giron on behalf of Professor Menendez

Please send copies of appeals to: - Salvadorean diplomatic representative to your country
- Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador, Av.
España No 928, San Salvador, El Salvador