

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Threats/Possible Extrajudicial
Execution/Fear for Safety

3 February 1994

GUATEMALA:

Fear for safety: Josefa Macaria CALEL
Manuela NAS
Francisco LEÓN GUARCAS
and other residents of Chiché

Killed: Felipe LEÓN NAS

Amnesty International is deeply concerned at the apparent extrajudicial execution on 27 December 1993 of Felipe León Nas in the Municipality of Chiché, El Quiché Department. The organization now fears that Josefa Macaria Calel, who has worked closely with Felipe León in the past, and other inhabitants of Chiché, particularly Felipe León's parents, Manuela Nas and Francisco León Guarcas, may also be in danger of being extrajudicially executed.

Reports indicate that five armed men shot Felipe León opposite the Municipal Hall in Chiché, just yards from the police station and in front of a group of people. Witnesses have been afraid to give statements for fear of reprisals.

According to Felipe León's parents, two weeks after their son was killed the chief of the Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil (PAC), Civil Defence Patrols, in Chiché said that the patrollers could take advantage of the impunity which has thus far prevailed with respect to Felipe León Nas' murder to kill other people in the village in the coming days.

Felipe León and Josefa Macaria Calel had worked in Acción Católica in Chiché.

Their work involved community development projects and religious education, and together they organized a choir and a musical group as part of an educational project for young people. Despite threats received in 1992 because of these activities on behalf of the community, Felipe León continued his work. He formed a committee for the development of his region and organized a literacy project together with the Committee for National Literacy (CONALFA).

Josefa Macaria no longer works in municipal activities but devotes her time to the Church Choir and her studies. However she has reportedly been the object of repeated threats and harassment. At the beginning of December, an unknown man arrived at her house and enquired after her. After the killing of Felipe León and fearing for her life, she fled to Guatemala City, where she found employment as a domestic help and continued her studies. A few days after she left, her house in Chiché was visited by unknown men asking for her and, apparently, the house was under surveillance. On 20 January 1994, as she made her way to the Night Institute of Secondary Education, two unknown men called her by her name and told her that she was being watched. They described all of her activities of the day before and, finally, they threatened her life and urged her to abandoned her job or else her employers would also be in danger. She is now in hiding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 6 June 1993 Ramiro de León Carpio, former Human Rights Procurator, was voted president by Congress to serve out the remaining term of President Jorge Serrano Elías. Ex-president Serrano had been forced from office after trying to seize near-dictatorial powers on 25 May 1993. When President de León Carpio came

to power there were expectations and hopes in certain quarters that he might be able to improve the human rights situation. However, since he assumed office, incidents of threats and intimidation have continued. Such abuses have sometimes been preceded by acts of intimidation and surveillance, such as in this instance.

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

- urging an investigation into the threats against Josefa Macaria Calel and asking for measures to be taken to ensure her safety;
- asking for guarantees for the safety of Manuela Nas and Francisco León Guarcas, the parents of Felipe León Mas, and for others in Chiché who may be in danger;
- urging an investigation into the assassination of Felipe León Nas and that those found responsible be brought to justice;

APPEALS TO

1) President of the Republic:

S.E. Ramiro de León Carpio
 Presidente de la República de Guatemala
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Presidente de León Carpio, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 537472, + 502 2 519702
Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU
Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Arnoldo Ortiz Moscoso
 Ministro de Gobernación
 Ministerio de Gobernación
 Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 515368
Telexes: 5085 MINGOB
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

3) Minister of Defence:

Gral. Mario Enríquez Morales
 Ministro de Defensa
 Ministerio de Defensa
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 515252/537472
Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Jorge García Laguardia
 Procurador de los Derechos Humanos
 12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1,
 Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Faxes: + 502 2 81734

Head of the Presidential Commission Coordinating the Policies of the Executive

relating to Human Rights:

Lic. Jorge Gonzalo Cabrera Hurtarte
Presidente
COPREDEH
15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Archbishop's Human Rights Office
Oficina de Derechos Humanos del
Arzobispado de Guatemala (ODHAG)
Apartado Postal 723
Guatemala, Guatemala

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 March 1994.