

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 34/006/2005

17 January 2005

Further Information on UA 06/05 (AMR 34/004/2005, 11 January 2005) - Fear for safety

GUATEMALA

Makrina Gudiel Álvarez (f)
Agridina Álvarez (f)
Carlos Ernesto Cruz Gudiel (f)
Óscar Cruz Gudiel (m)
José Gabriel Cruz Gudiel (m)

Makrina Gudiel has been attacked by men who apparently sprayed gasoline over the pick-up truck in which she was travelling and attempted to set it on fire. Amnesty International believes that she and her family are in very grave danger.

On 14 January at 7.30pm she and a work colleague were travelling from her home town of Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa to the regional capital of Escuintla. They noticed two cars following them, and after about 10 minutes, when they were still three kilometres from Escuintla, Makrina saw what she thought were raindrops falling on the windscreen. When she opened the window she realised that gasoline had been sprayed all over the pick-up truck from one of the following cars: in the dark she had not seen what was happening. Her colleague, who was driving, swerved in the road to prevent the following cars from coming alongside, which would have allowed them to set fire to the gasoline, and managed to escape into the car park of a nearby restaurant.

The two cars stopped on the road a short distance from the restaurant and waited, taking care to stay in the shadows so their number plates could not be seen. They switched their headlights on and off repeatedly and revved their engines, to show that they were watching and waiting. After 10 minutes the lead car drove closer to where Makrina and her colleague had parked, and the driver revved the engine for a few moments and then left. With the other car still waiting in the shadows Makrina and her colleague decided to flee and drove away at high speed to a friend's house in Escuintla. They arrived safely.

The *Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos*, Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, has now become involved in protecting Makrina and her family, and has provided them with a safe house where they are now in hiding.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish, English or your own language:

- expressing grave concern for the safety of the Makrina Gudiel, after the attempt on her life on 14 January in which her vehicle was sprayed with gasoline;
- calling on the authorities to provide her and her family with full protection and order an investigation into the threats and acts of intimidation they have suffered, with those responsible brought to justice;
- calling for a full investigation into illegal armed groups operating in the area of Escuintla;
- urging the authorities to take immediate measures to end the intimidation of public officials, so that they can carry out their duties without fear of intimidation.

APPEALS TO: (if a voice answers a fax number, ask 'me puede dar el tono de fax, por favor')

President

Presidente de la República de Guatemala.

Licenciado Oscar Berger Perdomo

Casa Presidencial, 6 a. Avenida, 4-18 zona 1. Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Fax: +502 2221 4423 / 2239-0090

Email: presidente@scspr.gob.gt

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear Mr. President

Minister of the Interior

Ministro de Gobernación

Carlos Vielman

6a.Avenida 4-64, zona 4, nivel 3.Ciudad de Guatemala. GUATEMALA

Fax: +502 2362-02 37

Email: ministro@mingob.gob.gt

Salutation: Señor Ministro/ Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Attorney General

Fiscal General de la República y jefe del Ministerio Público

Juan Luis Florido

8a. Avenida 10-67, Zona 1, Antiguo Edificio del Banco de los Trabajadores,

Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Fax: + 502 2251 2218

Presidential Commission for Human Rights

Comisión Presidencial de Derechos Humanos (COPREDEH)

Frank La Rue

13 Calle 15-33 zona 13

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: +502 2334-1615

Email: coprekeh@coprekeh.gob.gt

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 28 February 2005.