

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Threats/Intimidation

15 March 1993

GUATEMALA: Demetrio Antonio PÉREZ ORDÓÑEZ

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Demetrio Antonio Pérez Ordóñez, a counsellor with Covenant House (Casa Alianza), a refuge for street children in Guatemala.

According to information from Demetrio Pérez, on 2 March 1993 a light red Chevrolet pick-up with tinted windows and without licence plates, was seen parked outside the Covenant House group home "Villa Linda". When the pick-up approached two of the boys on the street outside the group home, Demetrio Pérez went outside and took the boys in.

On 7 March Demetrio Pérez received a telephone call at the group home and an unidentified male began insulting him and said "We are going to give you a beating, we are watching you" ("*Te vamos a dar una vergueada, te tenemos controlado.*") When the caller rang off Demetrio Pérez tried to get through to his supervisor, but the telephone no longer had a dialling tone.

According to Demetrio Pérez' mother on 7 March a caller had telephoned his house and when a member of the family answered, all they could hear was what they described as "agitated" breathing of an apparently male caller.

On 9 March when Demetrio Pérez was alone in the house he received a telephone call from a person he recognized as the same man who called on 7 March, again to the group home. The man shouted "We are going to kill you. You know you only have until Friday. Don't tell the police anything, we have your phone monitored." ("*Te vamos a mater maldito. Ya sabes que tienes plazo hasta el viernes. No digas nada a la policía, pues tenemos interferido tu teléfono.*")

On the following day 10 March, when Demetrio Pérez was leaving his home in Zone 7 of Guatemala City, he noticed the same light red pick-up that had been seen outside the group home on 2 March 1993 parked on the corner of his street. He jumped on the first bus he saw and so did not see what happened to the pick-up.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over two years ago Covenant House began denouncing human rights violations against street children in Guatemala, including beatings, torture, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions, reportedly carried out by official security force agents. Since that time its workers have been consistently targeted by the security forces. Street educators and staff of Covenant House have been subjected to harassment and intimidation, either because of their work protecting street children from abuse, because they have denounced human rights violations against the street children or because they have provided evidence as witnesses in judicial proceedings against members of the security forces.

On 2 and 3 March 1993 street educator Axel Mejía, who works at the Covenant House boys' Crisis Centre also received anonymous telephone death threats. He has been consistently intimidated and threatened with death since November 1990 when he was the principal witness to an incident involving abuse of street children by members of the National Police, Treasury Police and Mobile Military Police. (See UA 65/93, AMR 34/07/93 of 9 March 1993 and Guatemala: Children in Fear, AI Index: AMR 34/24/92 of May 1992).

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

- expressing concern at the reported death threats against Demetrio Antonio Pérez Ordóñez;
- asking that these threats be investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- calling for protection for Demetrio Pérez as well as all those working with street children.

APPEALS TO

1) President of the Republic:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías
Presidente de la República de Guatemala
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, Guatemala
Telegrams: Presidente Serrano, Guatemala,
Guatemala
Telephone: + 502 2 21212, + 502 2 22266
Faxes: + 502 2 537472; + 502 2 519702
Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /
Dear President

2) Minister of the Interior:

Lic. Francisco Perdomo
Ministro de Gobernación
Despacho Ministerial
Oficina No. 8, Primer Nivel
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, Guatemala
Telegrams: Ministro Gobernación,
Guatemala, Guatemala
Telephone: + 502 2 21212, ext 500;
+ 502 2 518105-6 (direct)
Telexes: 5085 MINGOB GU

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister
COPIES TO:

1) Interim Attorney General:
Lic. Edgar Tuna Valladares
Procurador General de la Nación
Procuraduría General de la Nación

3) Director of National Police:

Lic. Leopoldo Armando Guerra
Director General de la Policía Nacional
6 Avenida 13-71
Zona 1, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Director General de la Policia
Nacional, Guatemala, Guatemala
Telephone: + 502 2 20221 to 26,
+ 502 2 515158
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Salutation: Sr. Director General /
Dear Director General

4) Minister of Defence:

Gral. José García Samayoa
Jefe del Estado Mayor de Defensa Nacional
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, Guatemala
Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Guatemala,
Guatemala
Telephone: + 502 2 21212, ext 2226
Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

18 Calle 10-36, Zona 1, Guatemala
Guatemala

2) Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de Derechos Humanos
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-61
Zona 2,
Guatemala, Guatemala

3) Presidential Commission Coordinating the
Policies of the Executive in Human Rights
Matters:
Lic. Bernardo Neumann
Presidente
COPREDEH, 15 Avenida 18-38
Zona 13, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

4) Covenant House:
Casa Alianza
Apartado Postal 2704
Zona 1, 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 26 April 1993.