

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Threats

2 April 1993

GUATEMALA:

Byron BARRERA ORTIZ)	Víctor Hugo GUDIEL, student leader
Hugo ARCE	)	Helmer VELÁSQUEZ
Marco Augusto QUIROA	)	Oscar AZMITIA) development
Otto MORÁN	)	Mario SILVESTRE) workers
Carlos Rafael SOTO	)	Alberto MONTERROSO)
Haroldo SÁNCHEZ	)	Raquel GARTZ (female)
Marco Vinicio MEJIA	)	Rodolfo AZMITIA JIMÉNEZ, human rights
Mario Roberto MORALES	)	lawyer
Daniilo RODRÍGUEZ	)	Alberto ECHEVERRÍA
Rubén MEJÍA	)	Ricardo STEIN
Byron MORALES, trade unionist	)	Edgar FRANCO RIVERA
Romeo MONTERROSA, trade unionist and student leader	)	Andrés CAMPOS
	)	Héctor de LEÓN SAGASTUME

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the 24 people named above whose lives have been threatened in a leaflet which was circulated in Guatemala City on 27 March 1993.

The anonymous leaflet accused the 24 of "being spokespersons for, defenders of, and sympathizers with the subversion and its organizations" and of "causing and living from discrediting those of us who truly fight for freedom and peace in our country" ("*voceros, defensores y simpatizantes de la subversión y de sus organizaciones y por ser los causantes y vivir del desprestigio de aquéllos que luchamos de verdad por la libertad y la paz de nuestra patria*") and warned that as of 31 March, those named would be killed unless they publicly renounced their actions.

On a number of occasions in the past, those named on death lists or accused by the authorities of having links with the armed opposition in Guatemala have subsequently been assaulted, and a number killed. Several amongst those included on this latest death list have suffered previous human rights violations, including attempted extrajudicial executions.

Byron Barrera was the victim of an assassination attempt in October 1990 in which he was wounded and his wife was killed. Byron Morales, Organizing Coordinator of the Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala (UNSI TRAGUA), Guatemalan Workers' Union, and Romeo Monterrosa, a leader of the Asociación de Estudiantes Universitarios (AEU), Association of University Students of the University of San Carlos, have both repeatedly received death threats. The AEU offices were the object of bomb attacks twice in 1992, and many of its members received threats throughout that year. Hugo Arce, a political columnist of Tinamit magazine, has repeatedly received threats, and Tinamit's premises were bombed in October 1992. The other journalists mentioned above work for Siglo XXI, El Gráfico and Prensa Libre newspapers and the weekly magazine Crónica. All of these newspapers repeatedly reported receiving threats for their articles criticizing government policies or the government's human rights record (see UA 313/92, AMR 34/43/92 of 8 October 1992, and Guatemala - Written Statement

to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, AI Index AMR 34/08/93).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Trade unionists, student leaders, journalists and those working with non-governmental organizations, particularly those attempting to investigate and protect human rights have been long-term targets of abuses in Guatemala, including harassment, threats, torture, "disappearances", and extrajudicial executions. Such abuses have sometimes been preceded by anonymous death threats, such as those issued in this instance. On

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other occasions, government officials, including President Jorge Serrano Elías himself, have made unsubstantiated public accusations that human rights defenders were linked to the armed opposition in Guatemala. In many cases, serious human rights violations have followed such statements from the authorities.

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

- expressing concern that the persons named above have been threatened in an anonymous leaflet circulated in Guatemala City on 27 March 1993;
- urging the government to take immediate measures to protect the security of all those threatened in the leaflet;
- asking for enquiries into the origins of the threats and that those responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of the Republic:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías
Presidente de la República de Guatemala
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Salutation: **Excelentísimo Sr.
Presidente /
Dear President**

Telegrams: Presidente Serrano, Guatemala, Guatemala

Faxes: + 502 2 537472, + 502 2 519702

Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Francisco Perdomo
Ministro de Gobernación
Ministerio de Gobernación
Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Salutation: **Sr. Ministro /
Dear Minister**

Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala

Faxes: + 502 2 518105

Telexes: 5085 MINGOB

3) Minister of Defence:

Gral. José García Samayoa
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Salutation: **Sr. Ministro /
Dear Minister**

Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala

Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Human Rights Procurator:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos
12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1,

Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Faxes: + 502 2 81734

2) Head of the Presidential Commission
Coordinating the Policies of the Executive
relating to Human Rights:

Sr. Bernardo Neumann

COPREDEH

15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13

Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Faxes: + 502 2 347364

and if possible to one of the following:

Diario Prensa Libre

13 Calle 9-31, 50 Nivel

Edificio Prensa Libre

Zona 1, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Revista Crónica

6 Avenida 0-60

Zona 1, Guatemala 01004, Edificio Torre

Profesional II, Of. 312, GUATEMALA

Siglo XXI

7a Avenida 11-79

Edificio Galerías España, 6o Piso.

Zona 9, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Asociación de Estudiantes Universitarios

"Oliverio Castañeda de León" (AEU)

Ciudad Universitaria

Zona 12, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Diario El Gráfico

14 Avenida 9-18

Zona 1, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

UNSI TRAGUA

11 Calle 8-14, 3er Nivel

Edificio Tecún. Of. 34

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 14 May 1993.