

**EXTERNAL**

**AI Index: AMR 34/15/96**

**17 May 1996**

**Further information on UA 47/95 (AMR 34/04/95, 23 February 1995) - Threats / Intimidation and new concern Fear for safety**

**GUATEMALA**

**José Rubén ZAMORA MARROQUÍN, journalist**

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Amnesty International is deeply concerned for the safety of José Rubén Zamora Marroquín, ex-director of the Guatemalan daily newspaper *Siglo Veintiuno*, following a grenade attack on 16 May 1996.

Four unidentified men launched three grenades, one of which exploded, at the journalist's car, which was parked on the street in Guatemala City. José Rubén Zamora Marroquín was in a nearby restaurant at the time, having a meeting with the President of Channel 7 Television, Luis Rabe. After the attack, José Rubén Zamora Marroquín claimed that, "these actions were meant to make me leave the country", "*Con estas acciones lo que buscan es que abandone el país*".

José Rubén Zamora is a renowned journalist who has received several national and international press awards in recognition of his outstanding work in this field. Just over a year ago, on 13 February 1995, he was followed and threatened by people driving a car (see original UA).

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In the last few months, Amnesty International has received increasing and consistent reports of threats and intimidation against journalists in Guatemala, in which members of the security forces may be involved.

On 28 February 1996, Vinicio Pacheco, journalist of *Radio Sonora* in Guatemala City, who had reported on stories implicating members of the security forces in car thefts and kidnappings, was abducted in Guatemala City and was brutally kicked, beaten and burned on the feet and chest.

On 4 May 1996, Carlos Orellana, Director of *Radio Victoria* in Mazatenango, Sucitepéquez department, was also victim of an attack in which a bomb exploded in front of his house. No one was injured, and it caused only minor damage to the house (see UA 119/96, AMR 34/14/96, 7 May 1996).

*Siglo Veintiuno* played an important role in publicizing developments during the attempted *auto-golpe* (self-imposed coup) of 1993, and since then, members of its staff have periodically been subjected to threats and harassment. More recently *Siglo Veintiuno* has played an important role in publicizing information on impunity, corruption and human rights violations.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of José Rubén Zamora Marroquín and of other journalists working with the daily newspaper *Siglo Veintiuno*, and calling for immediate and adequate measures to guarantee their safety;
- calling for an immediate and thorough investigation into the grenade attack of 16 May 1996;
- expressing concern at reports indicating that members of the press are allegedly being systematically subjected to harassment and threats because

of the exercise of their freedom of expression and urging that all such reports be investigated and those responsible be brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO**

1) President of the Republic:

S.E. Álvaro Arzú Irigoyen  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: +502 287 45 37**  
**Telegrams: Presidente, Guatemala, GUATEMALA**  
**Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President**

2) Minister of Interior:

Ministro de Gobernación,  
Ministerio de Gobernación  
Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8  
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: +502 2 51 53 68**  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, GUATEMALA**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

3) Minister of Defence:

Julio Arnoldo Balconi Turcios  
Ministro de Defensa  
Ministerio de Defensa  
Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: +502 2 21906 (if voice, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")**  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala, GUATEMALA**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

4) Head of the National Police

Lic. Angel Antonio Conte Cajulún  
Director General de la Policía Nacional  
6 Avenida 13-71, Zona 1  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: +502 2 519 382**  
**Telegrams: Director General, Policia Nacional, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Salutation: Sr. Director General / Dear Director General**

**COPIES TO:**

Fiscal General

Fiscal General de la Nación  
Ministerio Público  
18 Calle 10-36, Zona 1  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: (502) 2 537554; (502) 2 530482**

Human Rights Procurator

Lic. Jorge García Laguardia  
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos  
12 Avenida 12-72  
Zona 1, Guatemala  
GUATEMALA  
**Fax: (502) 2 81734**

Siglo Veintiuno  
7a Avenida 11-63  
Edificio Galerías España, 6° Piso  
Zona 9, Guatemala  
GUATEMALA  
**Fax: (502) 2 319 145**

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 **10 July 1996**.