

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 34/037/2001

21 September 2001

Further information on UA 225/01 (AMR 34/036/01, 7 September 2001) - Fear for Safety/Extrajudicial execution

GUATEMALAWaldemar Barrera (m), Assistant Human Rights Procurator, Izabal Department.

Waldemar Barrera, an Assistant Human Rights Procurator in Izabal Department, has reportedly received a series of anonymous telephoned death threats. The threats arise from an investigation by the Human Rights Procurator's office into the apparent extrajudicial execution of radio journalist Jorge Alegría on 5 September. Waldemar Barrera, who heads the investigation, has reportedly publicly stated the names of those he believes responsible for the murder.

In the death threats, callers have demanded that Barrera cease investigating the case and make no further statements with respect to Alegría's murder. In a recent press release, the Human Rights Procurator, Julio Arango, urged the Interior Ministry, the Public Ministry and the Police authorities to guarantee Barrera's safety. He also stated that Alegría's murder was politically motivated and denounced officials from the Municipality of Puerto Barrios and the Santo Tomás de Castilla port authority as having ordered the killing. Arango further called on the Public Ministry to conduct a comprehensive investigation in order to identify and bring to justice those who planned, ordered and carried the murder of Jorge Alegría.

Jorge Alegría, who worked as a presenter for Radio Amatique was shot dead outside his house on 5 September. He had regularly denounced alleged corruption and wrongdoing by Izabal district officials and had encouraged callers to his program to do the same. This had resulted in him receiving a number of death threats before he was killed. His colleague Enrique Aceituno also received death threats, related to his anti-corruption reporting and consequently resigned from the station in fear of his life (see UA 225/01, AMR 34/036/2001, 7 September 2001).

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

- urging the authorities to take immediate and effective measures to protect Waldemar Barrera;
- calling for an immediate and thorough investigation into the death threats he has received, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- repeating your calls for a thorough investigation into the murder of Jorge Alegría and the threats against his colleague Enrique Aceituno, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic of Guatemala
 Lic. Alfonso Portillo Cabrera
 Presidente de la República de Guatemala
 6a. Avenida "A" 4-46, Zona 1, Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegram: President, Guatemala, Guatemala
Fax: + 502 239 0090
Email: mensajes@presidenteportillo.gob.gt
Salutation: Dear President/Señor Presidente

Minister of the Interior
 Sr. Byron Barrientos
 Ministro de Gobernación
 Ministerio de Gobernación, 6ª Avenida 4-64, Zona 4
 Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegram: Minister of Interior, Guatemala, Guatemala
Fax: + 502 362 0239
Salutation: Dear Minister/Señor Ministro

Attorney General
 Lic. Adolfo González Rodas
 Fiscal General de la República
 Ministerio Público
 8a. Avenida 10-67
 Zona 1, Tercer nivel
 Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegram: Attorney General, Guatemala, Guatemala
Fax: + 502 221 2718
Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Estimado Señor Fiscal General

COPIES TO:

Information Agency
 CERIGUA, 2a calle 1-42, Zona 1
 Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Tel/Faxes: + 502 238 1456/ 221 2521
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 Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 332 9761
E-mails: opinion@elperiodico.com.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 5 November 2001.