

UA 362/94

Fear for Safety / Extrajudicial Execution

30 September 1994

## GUATEMALA

Rubén García González, 13  
Daniel Rosales, 10  
Juan Humberto Ramos Cifuentes, 19  
Cecilio Jax, 16  
Fidel Solórzano, 12

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Víctor Manuel García, 12

There are fears for the safety of street children in Guatemala City after a sudden new wave of attacks in which five children have been killed and another wounded.

According to reports, on 24 September 1994, Rubén García González, Daniel Rosales and Víctor Manuel García were sleeping on a street corner in Zone 6 of Guatemala City, when two private policemen fired at them killing Rubén García and Daniel Rosales, and wounding Víctor Manuel García. The latter received two shots to his abdomen and right arm and is in a serious condition. He was taken to San Juan de Dios Hospital where he is currently recovering after an emergency operation. A private policeman has reportedly been assigned to guard him, allegedly to prevent him from escaping from the hospital, even though no charges have been brought against him.

The two private policemen accused of the murder were reportedly arrested in possession of a 45mm pistol and a 12 gauge shotgun, both of which had been fired. The two policemen are currently detained. They claim that the street children were raping a mentally handicapped indigenous woman and that they came to her rescue. Witnesses have reportedly refuted this and state that the two policemen had threatened the street children on several occasions.

Two days earlier, on 22 September, street child Fidel Solórzano was killed in an explosion when two unidentified men gave him a bag containing a powerful explosive device and then hurried off. His cousin Rigoberto Solórzano, who was with him, survived.

Other recent abuses against urban street children included an incident which occurred on 19 July. Street youths Juan Humberto Ramos Cifuentes, Cecilio Jax and Julio César Chávez Orozco, also known as "Pepito", were trying to break into a car when they were seen by two men who started firing at them with pistols. Julio Chávez managed to escape but saw the men detain the other two youths, both of whom had apparently been wounded. The two men who fired at the youths are reportedly private policemen. It has also been suggested that they may be members of a so-called death squad (*escuadrón de la muerte*). The bodies were later found in a rubbish dump with signs of torture and several bullets in the head.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

According to charitable agencies working with street children in Guatemala, there are some 5,000 such children on the streets of Guatemala City. In recent years, there have been several periods when they have been the target of abuses carried out primarily by the Guatemalan police as well as by employees of private security firms, licensed by the National Police and the Ministry of the Interior

(*Gobernación*). The abuses have included harassment, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, torture, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions. International pressure appeared to have offered the children some protection, and abuses against the children seemed to decrease. However, Amnesty International is now receiving new reports of abuses against street children. Other recent attacks against street children include the case of Sergio Miguel Chávez and Víctor Manuel Alex (UA 334/94, AMR 34/39/94, 9 September).

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

- expressing concern about the killing of Rubén García González, Daniel Rosales, Juan Humberto Ramos Cifuentes and Cecilio Jax in circumstances suggesting extrajudicial executions;
- expressing concern about the killing of Fidel Solórzano and asking for inquiries into the circumstances in which he died;
- expressing concern at the wounding of Víctor Manuel García and asking for guarantees for his safety and that of other street children;
- asking for a full investigation into these incidents, that the findings be made public and that those responsible be brought to justice.
- stressing that, as private security firms must, by law, be licensed by the National Police and the Ministry of Interior, Amnesty International considers the Guatemalan authorities responsible for investigating these incidents and bringing the perpetrators to justice.

**APPEALS TO**

1) President of the Republic:

S.E. Ramiro de León Carpio  
 Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Telegrams: Presidente de León Carpio, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 347364 / 527 472**  
**Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU**  
**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /Dear President**

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Danilo Parrinello Blanco  
 Ministro de Gobernación  
 Ministerio de Gobernación  
 Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8  
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 515 368 / 518 105**  
**Telexes: 5085 MINGOB**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

3) Director General of National Police

Lic. Salvador Figueroa  
 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 516268, 519429**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 519382**  
**Salutation: Licenciado Salvador Figueroa / Dear Sir**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Procurator:  
Lic. Jorge García Laguardia  
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos  
12 Av. 12-72, Zona 1  
Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: +502 2 81734**

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 11 November 1994.