

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/45/97

UA 181/97

Torture / Fear of torture

19 June 1997

MEXICO Fidel García Ramírez, political activist

On the morning of 15 June 1997, Fidel García Ramírez, secretary for Agrarian Affairs in the state of Guerrero for the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática*, PRD, Party of the Democratic Revolution, a legal opposition party, was arrested in the community of Xocoyolzintla, in the municipality of Ahuacuotzingo, state of Guerrero.

He was arrested by members of the *Policía de Seguridad Pública*, Public Security Police, who handed him over to members of the Mexican Army at 8am on the same day. He is reported to have been tortured to extract a confession of his supposed links with the *Ejército Popular Revolucionario*, EPR, Revolutionary Popular Army, an armed opposition group. Reports suggest that he is now being held in Chilpancingo prison.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned for the physical safety of Fidel García Ramírez.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since the massacre of 17 peasants on 28 June 1995 in Aguas Blancas in an ambush staged by Guerrero state police and government officials (see UA 159/95, AMR 41/15/95, 5 July 1995, and follow-ups AMR 41/16/95, 26 July 1995 and AMR 41/18/95, 17 August 1995), a wave of violence has swept through the state of Guerrero.

The EPR first appeared on 28 June 1996, the anniversary of the Aguas Blancas massacre. Since then the security forces and paramilitary groups have persistently targeted peasants and their leaders, including opposition party members, for intimidation, arrest, torture and extrajudicial execution, accusing them, as well as entire communities and organizations, of belonging to the EPR.

Two recent armed encounters between the EPR and the Mexican army have led to a heightening of tension and an increase in the number of PRD members and activists in Guerrero being targeted for human rights violations such as arbitrary detention and torture (see UA 157/97, AMR 41/35/97, 30 May 1997 and follow-ups AMR 41/37/97, 4 June and AMR 41/38/97, 6 June 1997, AMR 41/43/97, 13 June 1997). A climate of systematic human rights violations and impunity prevails in the state.

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

- urging an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into claims that Fidel García Ramírez has been tortured in detention to obtain a confession of his alleged links to the EPR;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that the physical integrity of Fidel García Ramírez is preserved while he is in detention, and to release him immediately if he is not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- calling on the authorities to grant Fidel García Ramírez immediate and continuing access to his family, medical treatment and a lawyer of his choice;
- calling for immediate measures to ensure the safety of all members of the PRD and other opposition parties in the state of Guerrero.

APPEALS TO:

1) Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Jorge Madrazo Cuéllar

Procurador General de la República

Procuraduría General de la República

Paseo de la Reforma y Violeta

Col. Guerrero, 06300 México D.F., MEXICO

Telegrams: Procurador Madrazo, México D.F., México

Faxes: (+52 5) 626 4419

Salutation: Sr. Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

3) Attorney General of the State of Guerrero

Lic. Antonio Hernández Díaz

Procurador del Estado de Guerrero

Carretera Nacional México-Acapulco Km. 6.300

CP 39.000, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, MEXICO.

Telegrams: Sr. Procurador, Guerrero, México

Faxes: + 52 747 223 28 (if voice ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear Attorney

3) Interim Governor of the State of Guerrero

Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero

Gobernador Interino del Estado de Guerrero

Palacio de Gobierno

Plaza Primer Congreso de Anahuac

39000 Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico

Telegrams: Gobernador Aguirre, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico

Faxes: + 52 747 23072 (if voice ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

1) Daily newspaper

Sr. Editor, La Jornada, Balderas 68, 06050 México D.F., MEXICO

2) Political Party

Partido de la Revolución Democrática

Secretaría de Derechos Humanos

Comité Ejecutivo Nacional

Huatusco No 37, Col. Roma Sur,

C.P. 06760 México D.F., MEXICO

and to diplomatic representatives of MEXICO accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 August 1997.