

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/74/96

UA 263/96 Possible "disappearance" / Fear for safety 14 November 1996

MEXICOGabino Hernández Garza, peasant leader and activist

Gabino Hernández Garza, peasant activist and representative of the Santa María Tequepexpan community on the *Consejo Indígena Campesino de Jalisco*, Indigenous Peasant Council of Jalisco state, has not been seen since 13 November 1996.

It is feared that he may have "disappeared" due to his active role in defending the interests of the Indian peasant community.

Gabino Hernández Garza left his home very early on the morning of 13 November in order to inspect some of the communal lands and report to the community.

Community members were waiting for him to report later that day at the communal meeting house but he did not arrive. Neither he nor the car he was driving have been seen.

Amnesty International's concern for Gabino Hernández Garza's safety has been heightened by reports indicating that on 12 November there was a major police operation in the community of Santa María Tequepexpan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International fears that Gabino Hernández Garza may be the latest victim of human rights violations by the security forces. Scores of civil rights and political and peasant activists have suffered serious human rights violations including "disappearances". Latest reports indicate that the number of "disappeared" have recently increased. Although some of the victims have reappeared within a short time, they have been tortured, ill-treated, threatened and harassed while "disappeared". The perpetrators of these gross human rights violations continue to go unpunished.

For more information on "disappearances" please refer to UA 255/96, AMR 41/70/96, 5 November 1996 and follow-ups, and UA 252/96, AMR 41/68/96, 1 November 1996 and also UA 249/96, AMR 41/67/96, 30 October 1996.

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

- expressing grave concern about Gabino Hernández Garza's "disappearance", and calling for immediate steps to establish his whereabouts and to guarantee his safety;
- requesting information about official actions taken on behalf of Gabino Hernández Garza, including the prosecution of those responsible for his "disappearance".

NOTE:

Like a number of governments, the Mexican authorities employ a large human rights bureaucracy, one task of which is to respond to public appeals, such as those generated by UAs. Those taking part in this UA should expect such a reply. In AI's experience, the Mexican authorities currently take little effective action beyond the paperwork to fully deal with AI's concerns, particularly impunity. However, given their sensitivity to international public opinion, UAs continue to be invaluable in confronting human rights emergencies in Mexico. Please forward replies to your Section or to the IS, where they will be monitored and acted upon. See also "Mexican Wave" (UA NEWS, ACT 60/01/96, March 1996).

APPEALS TO

1) Minister of Interior

Lic. Emilio Chuayffet Chemor
Secretario de Gobernación
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucarelli 99, 1er piso,
Col Juarez
06699 México D.F., MÉXICO

Telegrams: Secretario de Gobernación, México DF, México

Faxes: + 52 5 546 5350

Salutation: Sr. Secretario/ Dear Minister

2) Governor of the state of Jalisco

Lic. Alberto Cardenas Jiménez
Gobernador del estado de Jalisco
Pedro Moreno Corona s/n
44000, Guadalajara, Jalisco
MEXICO

Telegrams: Gobernador Cardenas, Jalisco, Mexico

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor

3) Attorney of the state of Jalisco

Lic. Leonardo Larios Guzmán
Procurador del Estado de Jalisco
Calzada Independencia Norte N# 778
Sector Libertad
44100 Guadalajara, Jalisco
MEXICO

Telegrams: Sr. Procurador, Jalisco, México

Faxes: + 52 36 186744 (voice line: ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear Attorney

COPIES TO:

1) Daily newspaper

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

2) Peasant Organization

Consejo Indígena Campesino de Jalisco
Puebla N# 255
Sector Hidalgo
Guadalajara, Jalisco
MÉXICO

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 20 December 1996.