

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/96/97

EXTRA 142/97

"Disappearance" / Fear of torture

21 October 1997

MEXICO

Pedro Antonio José

Guillermo José Cruz

Sixto Santiago Antonio

Rafael José Miguel

Nicolás Santiago Antonio

Encarnación Antonio José

Ernesto Santiago Antonio

Juan Martínez Sosa

- local government officials

Eight men have "disappeared" after being detained by the police, and are feared to be at serious risk of torture. The current whereabouts of the eight, who are all community activists and members of the municipal government of San Juan Ñumi, Oaxaca State, are unknown.

Pedro Antonio José, Guillermo José Cruz, Sixto Santiago Antonio, Rafael José Miguel and Nicolás Santiago Antonio were detained on 16 October 1997 by members of the judicial police along with two unidentified masked men in the municipality of San Juan Ñumi.

Three more men, Encarnación Antonio José, Ernesto Santiago Antonio and Juan Martínez Sosa, were detained the following day in the same municipality, again by the judicial police.

The eight appear to have been targeted solely for their peaceful community activism.

The state Attorney General has refused to give any information as to the men's whereabouts.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over the past year, Amnesty International has documented many cases of serious human rights violations in Oaxaca State. Members of the security forces have increasingly targeted community activists and members of the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD), Party of the Democratic Revolution, a legal opposition party, attempting to link them to the *Ejercito Popular Revolucionario* (EPR), Popular Revolutionary Army. The latter is an armed opposition group which has been operating mainly in the southern states of Oaxaca and Guerrero since July 1996. In the Loxicha region of Oaxaca state, at least 130 people have been arbitrarily detained, principally in the penitentiary of Santa María de Ixcotel, Oaxaca State. Amnesty International fears that they are all at serious risk of torture and has called for the unconditional release of those who have been accused on unfounded charges of having links to the EPR.

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

- calling for the whereabouts of the eight men to be made known immediately, for their physical safety be guaranteed;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released;
- urging that those responsible for the reported "disappearances" be brought to justice;
- expressing grave concern at the level of serious human rights violations

in Oaxaca State against community activists and members of legal opposition parties, and urging the authorities to take measures to prevent any further such violations.

APPEALS TO:

1) **Minister of Interior**

Lic. Emilio Chuayffet Chemor
Secretario de Gobernación
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucarelli 99, 1er piso,
Col Juárez, 06699 México DF, MEXICO

Telegrams: Secretario de Gobernación, México DF, México

Faxes: + 52 5 546 5350; + 525 535 9952

Salutation: Sr. Secretario / Dear Minister

2) **Governor of the State of Oaxaca**

Lic. Diódoro Carrasco Altamirano
Gobernador del Estado de Oaxaca
Palacio de Gobierno
Oaxaca, Oaxaca, MEXICO

Telegrams: Gobernador Carrasco, Oaxaca, Mexico

Faxes: + 52 951 637 37 (If voice, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor)

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Human rights organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos
"Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" A.C.
Puebla N. 153 Col. Roma,
06700 México D.F. MEXICO

Faxes: + 52 5 208 75 47

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 10 December 1997.