

UA 21/98

Death threats/Fear for safety

22 January 1998

PERU Jorge del Castillo, Congressman

Jorge del Castillo, a Peruvian opposition congressman and member of a congressional human rights sub-commission reportedly received an anonymous telephone call threatening him with death on 14 January 1998. Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

The congressional human rights sub-commission was established by the Congress' *Comisión de Derechos Humanos*, Human Rights Commission, in 1997, to investigate the killing of Pedro Huillca, the Secretary General of the *Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú*, General Confederation of Workers of Peru, which occurred in 1992. At the time the *Partido Comunista del Perú* (*Sendero Luminoso*), Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path), an armed opposition group (see *Amnesty International Annual Report 1993*), was thought to be responsible.

However, the killing was subsequently attributed, by former *Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército*, SIE, Army Intelligence Service agents, to have been carried out by members of the *Grupo Colina*, a "death squad" widely reported to have been made up of members of the SIE.

The death threat was received while Jorge del Castillo and two other congressmen, also members of the sub-commission, were questioning Santiago Martín Rivas, a former major of the SIE, in the congress building in Lima, the capital. In 1994 Santiago Martín Rivas and eight other army officers were found guilty and imprisoned by a military court for their involvement in the July 1992 massacre of nine students and a professor from La Cantuta University (see *Peru: La Cantuta killings and other human rights violations not yet fully investigated*, AI Index AMR 46/03/94, March 1994). However, the officers were subsequently released under an Amnesty Law passed in June 1995. The massacre was only one of a number of cases of "disappearances" and killings widely attributed to the *Grupo Colina*.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over the past months Amnesty International has documented numerous acts of intimidation, including armed attacks, short-term abductions, death threats and other forms of harassment against human rights defenders, journalists, judges, opposition parliamentarians and critics of President Alberto Fujimori's government. This intimidation has taken place in the context of revelations about human rights violations by members of the SIE, allegations of corruption by individuals linked to the government and armed forces, and opposition to what is widely perceived by many sectors in Peruvian society as "*un gobierno cívico-militar*", "an authoritarian civil-military government".

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

- expressing concern for the safety of congressman Jorge del Castillo, following a death threat he received on 14 January 1998 while conducting an inquiry by a congressional human rights sub-commission;
- calling on the authorities to ensure the full protection of Jorge del Castillo;
- calling for a full, effective and independent investigation into the death threat, the publication of the findings, and the bringing to justice of those responsible.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General

Dr Miguel Aljovín Swayne
Fiscal de la Nación
Fiscalía de la Nación
Av. Albancay, cuadra 5 s/n
Lima 1
PERU

Telegrams: Attorney General, Lima, Peru

Faxes: + 51 1 426 4429

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Estimado Fiscal de la Nación

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organisation

Asociación pro-Derechos Humanos
APRODEH
Jr Pachacútec 980
Lima 11
PERU

and to diplomatic representatives of PERU accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 March 1998.