

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

12 March 2001

PERU

Florinda Flores Linares (f)

Florinda Flores Linares has been threatened by three armed men in an apparent attempt to stop her efforts to bring to justice the police officers who allegedly killed her son. Amnesty International is concerned for her safety.

On 7 March a red car passed Florinda Flores Linares as she was making her way to her home in the Ayacucho department. There were six men in the car, one of whom were pointing in the direction of her house. When she reached the house, the car was parked outside and three armed men wearing plain clothes were trying to climb the wall and look through a window. They reportedly asked her to open the door and let them in. She refused and told them that she would report them to the police as "only thieves spy on other people's houses" ("*sólo los ladrones miran las casas ajenas*"). They told her to go ahead, as nothing would happen to them anyway. They also said her son died because he was a thief, and that the way he was killed was "the way thieves die" ("*así morían los ladrones*"). They left in the car a few minutes later.

Florinda Flores Linares's son, Carlos López Flores died from bullet wounds in November 2000. He had been working as a taxi driver when two police officers and a man wearing plain clothes stopped him and accused him being involved in drug trafficking. He was reportedly beaten and shot by the police officers. Florinda Flores Linares has filed an official complaint against the police officers with the aid of a Peruvian human rights organization. The case is now being investigated by the Ayacucho public prosecutor's office (*la oficina del fiscal de Ayacucho*).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Although the number of reported "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions have fallen in recent years, torture and ill-treatment, including death in custody, remains widespread in Peru. The police and security forces frequently threaten or harass victims, their relatives and witnesses in an attempt to make them drop the charges against alleged perpetrators of human rights violations. A number of people have reportedly received death threats, or have been subjected to other forms of harassment and intimidation. In many cases this has meant that victims of human rights abuses have been too frightened to continue the legal proceedings against the perpetrators, who as a result have been released without charge.

The Peruvian authorities have passed legislation making torture a punishable offence. However, since the legislation was adopted in February 1998, only two police officers have been brought to justice under this law.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Florinda Flores Linares and asking the authorities to guarantee her safety;
- noting that this incident appears to be an attempt to frighten her into stopping the legal proceedings against the police officers accused of ill-treating and killing her son, Carlos López Flores;
- expressing concern about the killing, asking that it is promptly and effectively investigated, that the findings of the investigation are made public, that those found to be responsible are brought to justice and that the victim's family receive adequate redress.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Justice
Dr Diego García Sayán
Ministro de Justicia

Ministerio de Justicia
Scipión Llona 350
Miraflores
Lima 18
PERU

Fax: + 511 422 3577

Salutation: Dear Minister / Sr. Ministro

Minister of the Interior and Police
General Fernando Dianderas Ottone
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Plaza 30 de Agosto s/n
Urb. Córpac
San Isidro
Lima 27
PERU

Fax: + 511 224 2405

Salutation: Dear Minister / Sr. Ministro

Attorney General
Dr Nelly Caldern Navarro
Fiscal de la Nación
Fiscalía de la Nación
Av. Abancay, Cuadra 5, s/n
Lima 1
PERU

Fax: + 511 427 1792 / 511 426 2800

Salutation: Dear Attorney General / Sra. Fiscal de la Nación

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization
Comisión de Derechos Humanos (COMISEDH)
Av. Horacio Urteaga 704
Jesús María
Apartado Postal 11-0237
Lima
PERU

Fax: + 51 1 423 3876 (If a voice answers, say 'fax, por favor')

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 23 April 2001.