

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 153/94 (AMR 46/08/94, 15 April 1994) - Arbitrary detention / Harassment / Torture

PERU Francisco ALEJOS MURILLO (please note new spelling)
 Tomás ESPINOZA CASTILLO
 Zacarías ZAVALETA CASTILLO
 Roger CÓRDOVA CASTILLO

Amnesty International has just learned that Francisco Alejos Murillo, Tomás Espinoza Castillo, Zacarías Zavaleta Castillo and Roger Córdova Castillo, detained on 20 March 1994 and charged with terrorism-related offences, have been released. All four men had been detained by members of the army in Sihuas province, Ancash department, on suspicion of having been involved with the armed opposition. The four are leaders of the independent and legally registered *Federación Provincial de Rondas Campesinas de Sihuas*, FPRCS, Provincial Federation of Civil Defence Patrols of Sihuas.

Information received by the organization in September 1994 indicates that Zacarías Zavaleta Castillo was released days after his detention in March. Francisco Alejos Murillo was released in June, and Tomás Espinoza Castillo and Roger Córdova Castillo were released in July, after a higher court decided to free them unconditionally because there was no evidence of them having any links to the armed opposition. Four weeks after their arrest, Amnesty International had declared them to be prisoners of conscience, and urged the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release them.

Amnesty International welcomes the belated release of the last three men listed above, but is seriously concerned by reports that all four men were tortured in custody. The organization has only received specific details about the alleged torture of Francisco Alejos Murillo. These details are contained in a copy of Francisco Alejos' statement filed before the examining judge in charge of his case. In his statement, he states that between 22 and 25 March he was repeatedly tortured by members of the army stationed at the military base in Sihuas. He was taken to nearby lakes where he was undressed and his hands and feet tied. He was submerged in the water and threatened with death unless he admitted that the President of the FPRCS was a member of the armed opposition.

Several times, sticks of dynamite were tied to his body and the fuse lit, or put in his mouth and lit, but were not allowed to explode. His pubic hair was also burnt, possibly with matches. He was repeatedly kicked and threatened with death as shots were fired in the air. On 25 March he was forced to drink water mixed with detergent, and a firearm was put into his mouth.

According to Francisco Alejos' statement, on 26 March he was taken to hospital and told by a member of the Peruvian army not to mention the torture he had been subjected to, and that he should claim that he was spitting blood because he was suffering from tuberculosis.

On 29 March the four men were transferred into the custody of the *Dirección Nacional Contra el Terrorismo*, DINCOTE, the anti-terrorism branch of the police.

According to Francisco Alejos' statement, members of the DINCOTE also forced him under torture to admit that the President of the FPRCS was a member of the armed opposition.

No further appeals by the Urgent Action Network are needed. Thank you to everyone who sent appeals.