

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 53/12/95

2 November 1995

Further information EXTRA 123/95 (AMR 53/11/95, 23 October 1995) - Fear of torture / Legal concern

VENEZUELA

Carlos José González
Osman José Colina Hernández
Guillermo Tamayo Rivas
Juan José Villamizar
Luis Gerónimo Velásquez
José Vargas Pérez

- students

All the above-named students, except for Carlos José González, were released on 26 October 1995. They had been arbitrarily detained by members of the *Guardia Nacional*, National Guard, in Naguanagua, Valencia, State of Carabobo, at a peaceful student demonstration on 17 October.

Carlos José González has been given a four-month prison sentence, under the Law of Vagrants and Crooks (*Ley de Vagos y Maleantes*) for participating in a public disturbance. He has been seen by his family and is said to be in good health.

Amnesty International has repeatedly called for the abolition of the Law of Vagrants and Crooks which enables administrative authorities to imprison people without trial for up to five years under vague charges. The law infringes the defendant's fundamental right to a fair, prompt and impartial trial, as established under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the American Convention on Human Rights. Both instruments have been adopted by Venezuela.

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

- welcoming the release of five of the six students detained on 17 October;
- expressing serious concern at the imprisonment of Carlos José González under the Law for Vagrants and Crooks, and calling for his immediate and unconditional release;
- reiterating serious concern about the use of the Law for Vagrants and Crooks to quell political or social dissent, and repeating calls for the law to be repealed, as it infringes international standards for fair trial, as proclaimed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the American Convention on Human Rights, to which Venezuela is a state party.

APPEALS TO

1) Minister of Interior
Ramón Escovar Salom
Ministro de Relaciones Interiores
Ministerio de Relaciones Interiores
Carmelitas a Santa Capilla
Caracas, Venezuela
Faxes: +58 2 833633; 815796
Telexes: 29694 MRI
Telegrams: Ministro Interiores, Caracas, Venezuela
Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

2) Governor of the State of Carabobo

Henrique Salas Romer
Gobernador del Estado
Carabobo
Palacio de Gobierno
Valencia
Estado de Carabobo
Venezuela

Telegrams: Gobernador Romer, Valencia, Carabobo, Venezuela

Faxes: +58 41 570783 and 577861

Salutation: Señor Gobernador / Dear Governor

COPIES TO

1) CODDECIUC

Boulevard de la Facultad de Derecho, e/Libertad y Colombia
Aptdo. Postal 121
Valencia 2001, Venezuela
Tel/Fax: +58 41 585060

and to diplomatic representatives of Venezuela accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your Section office, if sending appeals after 3 December 1995.