



**amnesty  
international**

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT  
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United Kingdom



**URGENT  
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture

27 October 1986

EL SALVADOR: Rafael VÁSQUEZ Daniel CUELLAR  
Sr. CRUZ HERNANDEZ Carlos ALAS

Amnesty International is concerned about that the above four people detained between 4 and 12 October 1986 may be subjected to torture or ill-treatment while being held in administrative detention.

Rafael Vásquez was detained on 12 October 1986 in Guayapa Abajo, Jurisdiction of Jujutla, Department of Ahuachapan, El Salvador, by uniformed members of the armed forces. He is a member of the Administrative Committee of the Federación de Asociaciones Cooperativas de Productos Agropecuarios de El Salvador (FEDECOOPADES), Federation of Agricultural Produce Cooperatives of El Salvador, an affiliate of the ConFederación de Asociaciones Cooperativas de El Salvador, (COACES), Confederation of Agricultural Produce Cooperatives of El Salvador, and President of the "Las Tablas" Cooperative in Jujutla, Department of Ahuachapan. His present whereabouts are unknown and the organization is concerned that Rafael Vásquez may be ill-treated while being held in investigative detention.

Amnesty International also received information that on 7 October 1986 Sr. Cruz Hernandez, a member of the 'Agua Zarza' Cooperative was detained on the Agua Zarza farm, Acajutla, Department of Sonsonate by heavily armed men in plain clothes, believed to be members of the security forces. He was subsequently transferred to National Police headquarters in San Salvador, where he reportedly remains under investigation.

On 4 October 1986, Daniel Cuellar and Carlos Alas were reportedly detained in the Department of Sonsonate while making their way to San Salvador, capital of El Salvador, to participate in a protest march organized by the Unidad Nacional de los Trabajadores Salvadoreños (UNTS), National Union of Salvadorian Workers. Their detention was carried out by armed members of the armed forces, in civilian clothes, who subsequently took them to the military base in Sonsonate. They were later transferred to National Police headquarters in San Salvador, where they are currently believed to be held under investigation. Daniel Cuellar and Carlos Alas, are also both members of the 'Agua Zarca' Cooperative, in Acajutla, Sonsonate.

Amnesty International is concerned that all four may be ill-treated during investigative detention. All are being held under Decree Law 50, promulgated in February 1984, which permits a 15 day period of administrative detention during which detainees may not be permitted access to legal counsel or visits from relatives. It is during this period of administrative detention that prisoners are reportedly frequently forced to sign false confessions under torture. The National Police is one of El Salvador's security branches frequently cited as responsible for torture or ill-treatment of detainees held in administrative detention.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International is concerned that members of trade unions have in recent years been specific targets of harassment and human rights

☎ 01-833 1771 Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1 Telex: 28502

Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the *release* of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed *prisoners of conscience*. It works for *fair and prompt trials* for all political prisoners and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the *death penalty* and *torture* or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of *all prisoners*

violations, including extrajudicial executions, "disappearances", arbitrary arrests and torture.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express letters/airmail letters:

NOTE: On 10 October, an earthquake occurred in El Salvador, affecting particularly San Salvador, the capital and outlying areas. As a result of the earthquake communications were severely disrupted so you may experience some delay in sending telegrams and telexes to the authorities.

expressing concern about reports of the arrest of Rafael Vásquez, Sr. Cruz Hernández, Daniel Cuellar and Carlos Alas and seeking assurances that they are being humanely treated while in custody;  
- requesting details of charges that may have been brought against them and urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought to trial.

APPEALS TO:

Exmo. Sr. José Napoleón Duarte  
Presidente de la República  
Casa Presidencial  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Cor. Adolfo Antonio Revelo  
Director General de la Policía Nacional  
6a Calle Oriente  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams to: Presidente Duarte,  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
Telexes: 20644 rs sal

Telegrams to: Director Policía  
Nacional, San Salvador, El Salvador

Dr. Julio Alfredo Samayoa  
Ministro de Justicia  
Ministerio de Justicia  
3a Av. Norte y 11a Calle Poniente  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams to: Ministro Justicia, San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Dr José Francisco Guerrero  
Procurador General  
1a Av. Norte y 5a Calle Poniente  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Señores  
COACES  
Apartado Postal 2094  
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Attorney General)

(Confederation of Agricultural  
Produce Cooperatives of El Salvador)

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 December 1986.

Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended action. If possible, send a telegram or express letter immediately to one or more of the addresses given. Other letters can be sent afterwards.

Telegrams and letters should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to relevant provisions in international law, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3 — "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Article 5 — "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 9 — "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

The name of Amnesty International may be used, although letters written in a private or personal capacity may be more effective.

Copies of appeals should be sent to relevant diplomatic representatives in your country.

In Urgent Action cases, Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the ill-treatment of prisoners. An appeal is issued when Amnesty International believes it has received reliable and accurate information in such cases. It is not always possible to verify all details independently and in some instances the situation outlined in the appeal may change. Urgent Action participants are always notified of any significant new facts.

Copies of any replies received from government authorities should be sent immediately to your section's Urgent Action coordinator or direct to the Campaign and Membership Department of the International Secretariat. If appropriate, thank the official who has replied and ask to be kept informed about the case.