

PUBLIC

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11 February 2003

Further information on UA 33/00 (AMR 19/005/2000, 10 February 2000) Fear for Safety New concern: Possible Extrajudicial Execution

BRAZIL **Marcos Luidson de Araújo (m), aged 24, Indigenous leader**
 Zenilda Maria de Araújo (f), his mother
 Diogo Araújo (m), aged 12
 Members of the Xucuru indigenous community in Pesquiera, Pernambuco state

Killed: **Adenílson Barbosa da Silva (m), aged 19**
 Joseílton José dos Santos (m), aged 25

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of indigenous leader Marcos Luidson de Araújo, his mother and other members of the Xucuru indigenous community, after Marcos Luidson de Araújo was injured in an attack which left two other indigenous men dead.

According to reports, on 7 February, Marcos Luidson de Araújo, his nephew Diogo Araújo, Adenílson Barbosa da Silva and Joseílton José dos Santos were driving a truck in the municipality of Pesquiera in Pernambuco state, when they had to stop to let a herd of cattle across the road in front of them. As they stopped, several unidentified gunmen opened fire on the truck. Adenílson Barbosa da Silva and Joseílton José dos Santos were killed. Marcos Luidson de Araújo, although injured, managed to escape. Diogo Araújo was unhurt. A group of Xucuru gave chase to the attackers, and four of the Xucuru were injured. By nightfall on the day of the attack, police had still not arrived at the scene.

It is believed that the attack was planned by landowners in the region, perhaps with the assistance of a small dissident group from the Xucuru community who have threatened Marcos Luidson de Araújo, the current leader of the Xucuru, in the past. He and his mother have received numerous death threats over the last three years, largely believed to be from local landowners. In October 2002 the Organisation of American States (OAS) called on the Brazilian authorities to protect Marcos Luidson de Araújo and his mother Zenilda Maria de Araújo. No protection has yet been provided for the family.

Although an area of 27,000 hectares in Pesquiera was demarcated in favour of the Xucuru in 1992 this has been disputed by landowners ever since. The Xucuru currently only occupy 20% of this area. The struggle for full recognition of their land rights has long been marked by bloodshed. Marcos Luidson de Araújo's father, Francisco de Assis Araújo, a previous leader of the Xucuru, was killed by gunmen on 20 May 1998 (see Amnesty International's report, *Brazil: Indigenous leaders marked for death - The killing of Francisco de Assis Araújo*, AMR 19/15/98). On 23 April 2001 another Xucuru leader, Francisco de Assis Santana, was shot dead in Pesquiera while on his way to meet members of FUNAI, the government's indigenous office (see Amnesty International Annual Report 2002). A landowner accused of the murder of Francisco de Assis Araújo allegedly committed suicide in custody last year.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Although indigenous groups welcomed the recent election of president Luis Inácio Lula da Silva and publicly stated their expectations of his government, there has been an alarming escalation in attacks and killings of indigenous people across Brazil so far this year. This violence appears to be as much the result of racial prejudice as motivated by disputes over land. On 6 January 2003 Leopoldo Crespo, a 77-year-old Kaingang Indian, was beaten to death by a group of youths in an apparently motiveless attack in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil's southernmost state. In Roraima state, in the far north of the country, the body of Aldo da Silva, a 52-year-old member of the Macuxi indigenous community, was found in suspicious circumstances in the

Raposa Serra do Sol indigenous territory. This area was recently the subject of a decision in favour of the Macuxi by Brazil's highest court. On 13 January, 72-year-old Marcos Verón, leader of the Guarani-kaiová indigenous community, was beaten to death during a violent confrontation between Indians and landowners in Mato Grosso do Sul, western Brazil.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Portuguese or your own language:

- expressing your concern for the safety of Marcos Luidson de Araújo, Zenilda Maria de Araújo and other members of the Xucuru indigenous community in Pesqueira, Pernambuco state;
- urging the authorities to provide Marcos Luidson de Araújo and all others at risk with immediate protection in accordance with their wishes;
- calling for full, prompt and impartial investigations into the attack on Marcos Luidson de Araújo and the killings of Adenilson Barbosa da Silva and Joseílton José dos Santos, and urging for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- asking the authorities to inform you of the progress of the investigations into the killings of Francisco de Assis Araújo and Francisco de Assis Santana;
- expressing your concern at the recent escalation in violence and attacks on indigenous people throughout Brazil, urge the Federal and state governments to make public declarations stating that attacks on indigenous Brazilians will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

In addition, when writing to the president of FUNAI:

- call for full investigations into the deaths of Leonardo Crespo in Rio Grande do Sul, Aldo da Silva in Roraima and Marcos Verón in Mato Grosso do Sul, that the results be made public and those responsible brought to justice;

APPEALS TO:

FUNAI President

Presidente da Funai

Eduardo Aguiar de Almeida

SEPS Quadra 702/902 Projeção A, Ed. Lex

70390-025 – Brasília – DF - Brasil

Telegrams: Presidente da FUNAI, Brasília – DF, Brasil

Fax: + 55 61 226 8782 (If someone answers say “Fax, por favor.”)

Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

Pernambuco State Governor

Exmo. Sr. Governador do Estado de Pernambuco

Jarbas de Andrade Vasconcelos

Palácio Campo das Princesas, Praça da República

50010-040 Recife–PE, Brasil

Telegrams: Governador do Estado de Pernambuco, Recife – PE, Brasil

Fax: +55 81 3224 8826

Salutation: Vossa Excelência / Your Excellency

Pernambuco Social Defence Secretary

Exmo. Sr Secretário da Defesa Social do Estado de Pernambuco

Gustavo Augusto Rodrigues de Lima

Rua Odorico Mendes, 700

52031-080 Recife–PE, Brasil

Telegrams: Sr Secretário da Defesa Social do Estado de Pernambuco, Recife – PE, Brasil

Fax: +55 81 3303 5109 (If someone answers say “Fax, por favor.”)

Salutation: Sr. Secretário / Dear Secretary

COPIES TO:

Indigenous Rights Organization

Conselho Indigenista Misionário (CIMI)

Rua Treze de Maio, 288 - Santo Amaro

50100-160 - Recife - PE , Brasil

and to diplomatic representatives of Brazil accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 March 2003.