

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 19/18/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 156/93 Political killing

14 May 1993

BRAZIL: Arnaldo Delcideo FERREIRA, Trade union leader, 47

Amnesty International is concerned at the killing of Arnaldo Delcideo Ferreira, President of the Rural workers trade union of Eldorado do Carajás, near Marabá in the south of Pará state on 2 May 1993 and at reports that the local authorities took no steps to protect him after he had received repeated death threats. He had survived three previous attempts on his life. Amnesty International remains concerned for the safety of fellow rural trade unionists in the South of Pará, in the light of a climate of impunity for such attacks.

During the very early morning of 2 May a gunman reportedly entered Arnaldo Ferreira's home and shot him while he was sleeping. His 17-year-old son who witnessed the killing immediately ran to the local police station. Both he and the local police chief were able to track down the gunman in the road, but the police chief reportedly did not attempt to arrest the man, as he was inadequately armed to tackle the gunman.

Arnaldo Ferreira had been receiving death threats for some time in connection with his trade union activities campaigning for land reform and against the eviction of peasants involved in land disputes with local landowners. He had also actively campaigned against deforestation in the Greater Carajas area, site of an internationally financed regional development programme centred on iron ore extraction for export. He had done some of this campaigning in association with the international environmental organization Greenpeace. He was also a member of the National Council of Rubber Tappers. He had recently been widowed and leaves 11 children.

On 17 March 1993 following the killing of the President of the Rural Workers' Trade Union of Araguaína, in neighbouring Tocantins State, Arnaldo Ferreira is reported to have commented to other trade unionists: "Who is going to be next?". Other trade unionists and those linked to environmental protection in the region, now fear for their lives.

In one of the previous attempts on his life, in April 1985, a gunman fired at him at the bus station in Eldorado. He was wounded in the attempt, but one of the shots aimed at him killed Sister Adelaide Molinari, a nun of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, who was talking to him at the time. Judicial proceedings into the killing of Sister Adelaide Molinari have been repeatedly stalled. The gunman accused of her killing escaped from police custody on one occasion, was recaptured, and then released by the local judge; he has since gone into hiding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Peasants, members and leaders of rural trade unions representing peasants and their families in Pará State have been targets of death threats, assaults, abductions and killing in the context of disputes with local landowners. While Amnesty International takes no position on land disputes, the organization is concerned at persistent impunity for killings of trade unionists which has in turn made them increasingly vulnerable to risk to their lives. Brazilian authorities on all levels have, in the vast majority of cases, failed to take

effective action to prevent or investigate the killings or to bring those responsible to justice.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Portuguese, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern about the killing of Arnaldo Delcidio Ferreira at his home in Eldorado Para on 2 May 1993 and urging for a full investigation into his killing and into the inaction of the local authorities following repeated threats on his life;

Page 2 of UA 156/93

- urging that those found responsible for the killing of Arnaldo Ferreira be brought to justice, as should those responsible for the killing of Sister Adelaide Molinari, killed during an earlier attempt on the trade unionist's life in April 1985;

- urging the authorities to take all the necessary steps to put an end to a climate of impunity for attacks on rural trade unionists in the south of Para state, and to protect those threatened for their trade union activities.

APPEALS TO:

1. Minister of Justice:

Exmo. Sr. Mauricio Correa
Ministro da Justiça
Esplanada dos Ministérios
Bloco 23
70.064 Brasilia DF, Brazil

**Salutation: Vossa Excelencia /
Your Excellency**

Telegrams: Ministerio da Justiça, Brasilia, Brazil
Faxes: +55 61 224 4357
Telexes: 611003 MNJU BR, 611088 MNJU BR

2. State Governor of Pará:

Exmo Sr Jáder Barbalho
Governador do Estado do Pará
Palácio Lauro Sodre
Praça Dom Pedro II
66.000 Belem, PA, Brazil

**Salutation: Vossa Excelencia /
Your Excellency**

Telegrams: Governador Para, Belem, Brazil
Telexes: 911012 GOPA BR or 916978 GOPA BR

3. State Secretary of Public Security:

Sr Secretario de Segurança Pública
do Estado do Pará

**Salutation: Vossa Excelencia /
Your Excellency**

Sr Alcides Alcântara
Rua 28 de Setembro 339
66.020 Belem, PA, Brazil

Telegrams: Secretario Segurança Pública, Belem, Brazil
Telexes: 911100 SSPB BR

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Attorney General's Office:
Dr. Alvaro Ribeiro da Costa
Procuradoria Geral da República

Secretaria de Coordenação da Defesa
dos Direitos Individuais e dos
Interesses Difusos

Avenida L2 Sul, SG AS 603, Lote 23 S.328
Brasilia, Brazil

2) Local human rights organization:
Sociedade Paraense de Defesa dos Direitos
Humanos
Núcleo Marabá
Rua 5 de Abril 498
Caixa Postal 277
CEP 68500, Marabá, Pará
Brazil

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 June 1993.