

UA 236/97

Possible Extrajudicial Executions/Fear for safety 25 July 1997

**BRAZIL José Miguel dos Santos (18), "Carlos" and "Magão",
Husles Souza Santos, male homosexuals, victims of possible
extrajudicial executions**

**"Aleska", "Fabiana" and other male homosexuals tortured
in Maceió, state capital of Alagoas**

Amnesty International fears for the safety of male homosexual prostitutes in Maceió, state capital of Alagoas, following allegations that this group has been targeted for extrajudicial executions and torture by the civil police. Amnesty International is also concerned about the pattern of almost total impunity for the perpetrators of such violations.

On 6 June 1997, a transvestite and two homosexuals were executed with gunshots to the head in the centre of Maceió, where they were working as prostitutes. Their bodies were found in the Pontal de Barra area. Only one body has so far been fully identified, that of José Miguel dos Santos. The other two homosexuals have been identified as "Carlos" and "Magão". A police investigation has been opened in the 3rd Precinct of the Civil Police in Maceió, despite the fact that two officers of the same police station and one civilian have been accused of the crime. It is alleged that the civil police have been running a "protection racket" among the prostitutes. The three victims were working close to the precinct and it is believed they were murdered because they had not paid their "fee" of U\$10 a night to the police.

On 10 June 1997, three other transvestites were arrested in the streets of Maceió where they were working as prostitutes. They were taken to the 2nd Precinct of the Civil Police where they were tortured and beaten, allegedly for having failed to pay their "fee" to the police. They were brutally beaten with rubber sandals studded with nails, and then were forced to clean the station, including filthy lavatories - a form of humiliation reportedly experienced frequently by homosexuals and transvestites taken to police stations in Brazil. Only one underwent an official medical examination (*exame de corpo de delito*). Two later sought the help of a local gay rights group, the *Grupo Gay de Alagoas*, (the Gay Group of Alagoas) and all are too scared to make an official complaint. Those two, known by their nicknames, Aleska and Fabiana, are currently living in a "safe house" provided the *Grupo Gay de Alagoas*. The head of the civil police in the capital, Dr Mario Pedro, has said that he will open an official enquiry only if they are willing to make an official complaint.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International recently wrote to the state authorities of Alagoas after Pedro Montenegro, a member of the board of the *Fórum Permanente Contra a Violência em Alagoas* (FPCV-AL) and of Amnesty International's Brazilian Section, and Marcelo Nascimento, a member of the FPCV-AL and the President of the *Grupo Gay de Alagoas*, had received anonymous death threats.

Pedro Montegro and Marcelo Nascimento have been insisting on a police enquiry into the recent killings of the three transvestites. On 18 June both received an anonymous phone call warning them to drop their investigations or they would be killed. They were both given military police protection.

Reports from the *Grupo Gay de Alagoas* indicate that at least seven transvestites and male homosexuals have been extrajudicially executed in the last year. In only one case has a police investigation been opened, that of Husles Souza Santos, known as Morgana, a transvestite who was murdered on 27 January by an ex-military policeman who was caught *in flagrante*. Husles Souza Santos was allegedly killed because he was a key witness to the murders of three other transvestites killed in 1996.

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

- expressing concern at allegations that transvestites in Maceió have been subject to extrajudicial executions and torture at the hands of the civil police who are also extorting money from them;
- calling on the authorities of Alagoas state to ensure that such human rights violations are promptly, effectively and impartially investigated; that all public officials implicated be immediately suspended pending the outcome of investigations; and that those found responsible be brought to justice and the findings made public;
- calling upon the authorities in Maceió to prevent further human rights violations against transvestites;
- expressing concern at the high level of impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of human rights violations against homosexuals and transvestites in Alagoas;
- calling on the state authorities of Alagoas to ensure that the death threats made against Pedro Montenegro and Marcelo Nascimento are promptly, effectively and impartially investigated and that those responsible are brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Governor, Alagoas

Exmo. Senhor Manoel Gomes de Barros
Governador Interino do Estado de Alagoas
Palácio Marechal Floriano Peixoto 517
Maceió, Alagoas
CEP 57020-901, Brazil

Telegrams: Governador, Alagoas, Brazil

Fax: +55 82 326 5724 (If voice ask: "Por favor, dá sinal de fax")

Salutation: Your Excellency/ Vossa Excelência

Secretary of Public Security

Col. José de Azevedo Amaral
Rua Campos Tamadaré
Pontal da Barra, Maceió
Alagoas CEP 57010, Brazil

Telegrams: Secretário de Segurança Pública, Alagoas, Brazil

Fax: +55 82 338 1550 (If voice ask: "Por favor, dá sinal de fax")

Salutation: Dear Sir/Sr. Secretário

Commander of the Military Police

João Evaristo
Cuartel Militar da Polícia Militar
Praça da Independência s/n
Centro, Maceió
Alagoas CEP 57020-410, Brazil

Telegrams: Comandante da Polícia Militar, Alagoas, Brazil

Fax: +55 82 326 5724

Salutation: Dear Sir/Sr. Secretário

COPIES TO:

Fórum Permanente Contra a Violência em Alagoas

Rua Manaus, 496 Prado,

Maceió, CEP 57011-410

Alagoas, Brazil

Fax: +55 82 221 9334/ 221 0667

Secretary, Human Rights Secretariat

Exmo. Sr. Secretário dos Direitos Humanos

Dr. José Gregori

Secretaria Nacional dos Direitos Humanos

Ministério da Justiça

Esplanada dos Ministérios

Bloco T, Anexo II, 2º Andar

Brasília DF, CEP 70064-900, Brazil

Fax: +55 61 225 0440

and to diplomatic representatives of Brazil accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with your section office, or the International Secretariat, if sending appeals after 5 September 1997.