

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information (1) on UA 175/95 (AMR 25/08/95, 14 July 1995) - Arbitrary Arrest / Possible Prisoners of Conscience

Please send up to 10 appeals per section.

CUBARafael SOLANO, director of Habana Press (note correct spelling)

Hector PERAZA, coordinator of Habana Press

new name:

José RIVERO GARCÍA, journalist working with Habana Press

and other independent journalists

Amnesty International has learned that Hector Peraza, coordinator of Habana Press, an unofficial press agency, who was detained on 12 July, was released shortly afterwards, apparently without charge. However, José Rivero García, a journalist who writes articles for the same agency and who had also been detained briefly on or about 12 July, received a visit from State Security agents at his home on 18 July and was issued with an official warning ("*acta de advertencia*"), informing him that if he continued with his journalistic activities, he would be charged with spreading "enemy propaganda". A fax machine, video camera and other photographic equipment belonging to him had been confiscated by the authorities the week before.

Also on 18 July, a member of the executive of Habana Press, Raúl Rivero, was accosted in a Havana street by a stranger, who stole his briefcase. The briefcase contained seven articles written by journalists working with the agency which he was reportedly taking to someone to try to have them published abroad. Although the identity of his attacker is not known, coming as it did in the context of an apparent crackdown by the authorities on the activities of independent journalists in Cuba, there is reason to believe that the attack may not have been a coincidence.

There has been no further news of Nestor Baguer, the president of the non-governmental *Agencia de Prensa Independiente de Cuba (APIC)*, who had a fax machine and documents confiscated and his phone cut off on 12 July by the State Security Police.

At the time of writing, a possible charge of spreading "enemy propaganda" is hanging over José Rivero García, already mentioned above, and Rafael Solano, director of Habana Press, who had already received an official warning on 13 July (see previous UA), if they continue to transmit what the Cuban authorities have described as "articles damaging to the system" to foreign newspapers and radio stations. On the basis of the information so far available, Amnesty International believes that, if imprisoned for this reason, they would be prisoners of conscience, detained solely for attempting to peacefully exercise their right to freedom of expression.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at reports that Rafael Solano and José Rivero García have been issued with official warnings that they will be charged with spreading "enemy propaganda" if they continue with their activities for Habana Press;

- requesting that any charges brought against members of Habana Press and APIC in connection with their attempts to peacefully exercise their right to freedom of expression, be dropped;

- urging that members of Habana Press, the APIC, and other freelance journalists be permitted to carry out their legitimate journalistic activities without such interference from the authorities.

APPEALS TO:

1) Attorney-General

Dr Juan Escalona Reguera
Fiscal General de la República
Fiscalía General de la República
San Rafael 3
La Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Fiscal General, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511456 fisge

Faxes: + 53 7 333164

Salutation: Señor Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General

2) Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sr Roberto Robaina González
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Calzada No. 360
Vedado

La Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511122 / 511464 / 512950

Faxes: + 53 7 333085 / + 53 7 335261

Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

3) Department of State Security

Sr Director
Departamento de Seguridad del Estado
Villa Marista
La Víbora
La Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Director, Villa Marista, Havana, Cuba

Salutation: Señor Director / Dear Sir

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Cuban Journalists' Union (official body)

Unión de Periodistas de Cuba
Calle 23 No. 452
Apdo 6646
Vedado
Havana, Cuba

Editor of Granma (daily newspaper)

Sr Jacinto Granda de Laserna
Granma
Apdo 6260
La Habana, Cuba

and to diplomatic representatives of Cuba accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International secretariat, or your section office if sending appeals after 4 September 1995.