

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

**AI Index: AMR 25/14/93
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This is a limited action. Please send up to 10 appeals per section.

22 October 1993

Further information on UA 21/93 (AMR 25/03/93, 29 January 1993) - Legal Concern/Health Concern/Hunger-Strike - and follow-ups (AMR 25/04/93, 26 February, and AMR 25/09/93, 1 September)

**CUBA: Amador BLANCO HERNANDEZ, aged 41, former university professor and President of the unofficial Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos "José Martí" ("José Martí" National Human Rights Commission)
Joel MESA MORALES, aged 29, Vice-President of the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos**

and new name: Jorge Luis ALVAREZ ANTUNES, aged about 20

Amador Blanco Hernández and Joel Mesa Morales have been sentenced to eight and seven years' imprisonment respectively on charges of "enemy propaganda". They are believed to have appealed against the sentences which were issued after their trial on 3 September at the **Tribunal Provincial Popular de Villa Clara**, Villa Clara People's Provincial Tribunal.

According to unofficial reports of the trial, the defence lawyer was prevented from presenting witnesses on behalf of his clients. Furthermore, one of the witnesses for the prosecution was political prisoner Jorge Luis Alvarez Antunes, who is serving a ten-year sentence, also for "enemy propaganda", in Santa Clara Provincial Prison.

He was called as a witness because he was said to have led a hunger-strike in the prison after Amador Blanco had issued calls for such an action via US-based radio stations run by Cuban exile groups opposing the government of President Fidel Castro.

However, when he was brought into court, Jorge Luis Alvarez is said to have started shouting from the witness box that he had been tortured and lifted his shirt to show the scars he said were produced when, while handcuffed, dogs were set upon him. He also showed marks where he said guards had beaten him with rubber hoses.

Both his parents are said to have died while he has been in prison. When his mother was ill, guards are said to have taunted him that he could not be there to help her. He was not permitted to attend the funeral. He is also said to have been threatened that one day he will be found hanging in his cell.

There is no news of what has happened to Jorge Luis Alvarez since the trial of Amador Blanco and Joel Mesa. Amnesty International is concerned for his wellbeing and fears that reprisals may be taken against him because of his outburst in court. Although little information is known about the reasons for his arrest and conviction, it is likely that he too is a prisoner of conscience.

Amnesty International continues to believe that Amador Blanco Hernández and Joel Mesa Morales are prisoners of conscience, detained solely on account of their

non-violent activities in opposition to the Cuban government and in support of human rights. The organization has learned that, while under interrogation, they were shown a copy of the Amnesty Urgent Action by the prosecutor, who said something to the effect of "See how famous you have become for defaming the revolution".

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters in Spanish, English or your own language:

- urging the immediate and unconditional release of Amador Blanco Hernández and Joel Mesa Morales on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience, detained solely on account of their non-violent activities in opposition to the Cuban government and in support of human rights;
- urging that an immediate impartial investigation be carried out into the allegations made by Jorge Luis Alvarez Antunes during the trial hearing that he was tortured;
- urging that no reprisals be taken against him on account of the statements he made during the hearing.

APPEALS TO:

1) President:

Dr Fidel Castro Ruz
 Presidente del Consejo de Estado
 Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: President Castro, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511122 / 511464 / 512950

Faxes: + 53 7 333085 / + 53 7 335261

(These telex and fax numbers are for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - please ask them to forward your message to President Castro)

Salutation: Señor Presidente / Dear President

2) Attorney-General:

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

Telegrams: Fiscal General, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511456 FISGE

Faxes: + 5 37 333164

Salutation: Señor Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General

3) President of the Supreme Court

Dr José Raúl Amaro Salup
 Presidente del Tribunal Supremo Popular
 Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

Telegrams: Presidente, Tribunal Supremo Popular, Havana, Cuba

Telexes: 511457 tsupo

Salutation: Señor Doctor / Dear Dr Amaro

4) Minister of Foreign Affairs:

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

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Director of Villa Clara Provincial Prison

Sr Director

Prisión Provincial de Villa Clara

Santa Clara

Provincia de Villa Clara, Cuba

Newspaper

Granma

Apartado 6260

Ciudad de 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 December 1993.