

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

**AI Index: AMR 25/20/91
Distr: UA/SC**

26 July 1991

Further information on UA 257/91 (AMR 25/19/91, 25 July 1991) - Prisoner of Conscience/Legal Concern/Health Concern

CUBA: Roberto LUQUE ESCALONA, writer and former journalist, aged 55

Amnesty International has received further details concerning the current situation of Roberto Luque Escalona, who was arrested in Havana on 19 July 1991. He is being held in the Departamento Provincial de Operaciones Policiales, Provincial Police Operations Department, of the Departamento Técnico de Investigaciones (DTI), Technical Investigations Department. His wife was able to visit him for about 20 minutes on 24 July 1991 in the presence of the police lieutenant in charge of the investigation of his case. She was reportedly told that her husband is being investigated on a charge of desacato, disrespect, under article 144.2 of the Cuban Penal Code, rather than a public order offence as was originally reported. Article 144.2 states that anyone who insults or offends a senior government official can be sentenced to between one and three years' imprisonment. This charge has frequently been used in the past against anyone who criticizes President Fidel Castro. Roberto Luque's wife was informed that she could appoint a lawyer for her husband. However, it is unusual for detainees held on charges of a political nature to have direct access to a lawyer until the investigatory phase of the proceedings is completed, sometimes only very shortly before their trial is due to take place.

Roberto Luque Escalona is still on hunger strike and was reportedly told in the course of a recent medical examination that he is suffering from emphysema of the lungs.

Amnesty International believes that Roberto Luque Escalona is a prisoner of conscience detained for peacefully expressing his political beliefs and is urging that he be immediately and unconditionally released.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters and telephone calls:

- urging the immediate and unconditional release of Roberto Luque Escalona on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience detained for peacefully expressing his political beliefs;
- requesting that he be humanely treated while in detention, allowed full access to family and lawyers, and be given adequate medical treatment;
- requesting that all independent human rights monitors and non-violent political dissidents be permitted to carry out their legitimate activities unhindered.

APPEALS TO:

Dr Fidel Castro Ruz
[Salutation: Su Excelencia]
 Presidente del Consejo de Estado
 y del Consejo de Ministros
 Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba
Telegrams: Presidente Castro, Havana, Cuba
Telexes: 51212 P DESP PRESID

General Abelardo Colomé Ibarra
[Salutation: Señor Ministro]
 Ministro del Interior
 Ministerio del Interior
 Plaza de la Revolución
 Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba
Telegrams: Ministro Interior, Havana, Cuba
Telexes: 511122 / 511464 / 511560 MINREX HAB

Dr Ramón de la Cruz Ochoa
[Salutation: Señor Fiscal General]
 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

Señor Director
 Departamento Provincial de Operaciones
 Policiales
 Departamento Técnico de Investigaciones
 Calle 100 y Avenida Aldabó
 Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba
Telephone: Havana 44 45 04
(PLEASE ONLY ORGANIZE ONE TELEPHONE CALL PER SECTION)

COPIES TO:

CODEHU
 1040 S.W. 27 Ave
 Miami
 FL 33135
 USA
(Coordinating Body of Human Rights Organizations in Cuba, which includes the CCDHRN)

and to diplomatic representatives of Cuba in your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 September 1991.