

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 25/056/2003

19 November 2003

**Further Information on UA 112/03 (AMR 25/016/2003, 24 April 2003) - Medical concern/ Prisoner of Conscience (POC)**

**CUBA**                      **Oscar Espinosa Chepe (m), aged 62**

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Amnesty International is concerned for the health of 62 year old prisoner of conscience Oscar Espinosa Chepe, who currently being held at Carlos J. Finlay Military Prison in Havana. His serious illnesses include chronic disease of the liver, chronic worsening inflammation of the stomach and duodenum, acute hepatic problems and hypertension.

Oscar Espinosa Chepe is reportedly being held in a solitary cell with the lights constantly on. He is not being allowed to use the telephone, or to receive or write letters. His family has been told that they will be able to visit him "depending on how they behave," a possible reference to his wife's statements to international media.

Oscar Espinosa Chepe's family has repeatedly complained about the lack of information given to them about his medical condition and the treatment he has been receiving. They have expressed concern about reported lack of adequate medical care he has received. They have given the example of when he was sent back from *Hospital Ambrosio Grillo* in the town of Santiago de Cuba to his cell at Boniato prison without being completely healed.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On 18 March 2003, Oscar Espinosa Chepe was arrested during a massive crackdown by the Cuban Government, during which at least 75 dissidents were detained (see AMR 25/008/2003, 3 April 2003). He was subsequently tried on 3 April in case number 351/03, and was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment, according to articles 7 and 11 of Law 88. He was accused of "activities against the integrity and sovereignty of the State", "*actividades contra la integridad y la soberanía del Estado*", by allegedly receiving money from abroad, collecting press cuttings about meetings between representatives from the USA and dissidents and other activities.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern about reports on Oscar Espinosa Chepe's current state of health;
- calling for his family to be allowed to be allowed to visit and correspond with him on a regular basis without any interruptions;
- asking for his immediate and unconditional release on the grounds of his severe ill-health, his age and his POC status, so that he is able to enjoy the remainder of his life in liberty with his friends and family;
- calling upon the Government of Cuba to show due respect for elderly prisoners and stating that societies are often legitimately judged on how they treat their more vulnerable members, including the elderly;

**APPEALS TO: (It may be difficult to get through to these numbers, please keep trying)**

Head of State and Government

Dr Fidel Castro Ruz

Presidente de los Consejos de Estados y de Ministros

La Habana, Cuba

**Telegram:** President Castro, La Habana, Cuba  
**Fax:** + 53 7 333 085 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)  
**Email:** f\_castro@cuba.gov.cu  
**Salutation:** Su Excelencia/ Your Excellency

Attorney-General

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

**Telegram:** Fiscal General, La Habana, Cuba  
**Fax:** + 53 7 669 485 / + 53 7 333 164  
**Salutation:** Señor Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sr Felipe Pérez Roque  
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
Calzada No. 360  
Vedado, La Habana, Cuba

**Telegram:** Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, La Habana, Cuba  
**Fax:** + 53 7 333 085  
**E-mail:** [cubaminrex@minrex.gov.cu](mailto:cubaminrex@minrex.gov.cu)  
**Salutation:** Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

Interior Secretary

General Abelardo Coloma Ibarra  
Ministro del Interior y Prisiones  
Ministerio del Interior  
Plaza de la Revolución  
La Habana, Cuba

**Telegram:** Ministerio del Interior, La Habana, Cuba  
**Fax:** + 53 7 8301 566  
**Salutation:** Señor Ministro / Dear Minister

**COPIES 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 31 December 2003.