

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 87/93 Torture/Death in Custody

25 March 1993

ECUADOR: Luis Olmedo AGUILERA LOPEZ (aged 45)

Amnesty International is concerned about the reported torture and death in custody of Ecuadorean peasant leader Luis Olmedo Aguilera López.

According to a police report, Luis Aguilera was detained on 24 February 1993 at his home in the village of Pintag, near Quito, by a member of the police attached to the Oficina de Investigación del Delito - Pichincha, OID, Office of Crime Investigation. Luis Aguilera was accused of stealing cattle from a local landowner.

According to this report, Luis Aguilera was taken by the policeman on 24 February to the Centro de Detención Provisional, Provisional Detention Centre, in Quito. The policeman's report states that Luis Aguilera arrived at the detention centre "*sin golpes ni hematomas en su cuerpo*", "without beatings or bruises on his body". On 25 February Luis Aguilera was transferred by the Comisaría Tercera Nacional del Cantón de Quito, the 3rd National Police District in the Cantón of Quito, to the Oficina de Investigación del Delito-Pichincha, OID-P, the Crime Investigation Office in Pichincha. At about 1pm on the same day, relatives of the detainee saw him at the OID premises with apparent signs of him having been severely beaten. He was reportedly unable to walk.

On 2 March 1993, according to a letter written by the head of the OID-P, Luis Aguilera was transferred back into the custody of the Comisaría Tercera Nacional del Cantón de Quito. This branch of the police apparently transferred him back to the Centro de Detención Provisional. However he was taken to the Hospital Eugenio Espejo on the same day. According to two reports dated 2 and 3 of March respectively, his body showed signs of bruising.

A police autopsy report dated 4 March 1993 states that Luis Aguilera's body revealed signs of bruising which Amnesty International believes may be consistent with him having been beaten.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Information received by Amnesty International over the years suggests that torture and ill-treatment of criminal suspects are common practice during police interrogation in Ecuador. Ecuadorean legislation forbids the use of torture and the government has ratified international treaties that oppose its use, including the United Nations Convention Against Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This Convention states that state parties are to prevent torture and make it a punishable offence.

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

- expressing concern at the reported torture and death in custody of Luis Olmedo Aguilera López;

- expressing concern that, according to a police autopsy, the body of Luis Aguilera revealed signs of bruising which Amnesty International believes may be consistent with him having been subjected to torture;

- urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation into the torture and death in custody of Luis Olmedo Aguilera López;

- urging that the results be made public and those found responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO

1) President of Ecuador:

Sr. Sixto Durán Ballén
Presidente de la República
del Ecuador
Palacio de Gobierno
García Moreno 1043
Quito, ECUADOR

Telegrams: Presidente Ballen, Quito, Ecuador

Telexes: 22375/22201 prerep ed

Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

2) Minister of the Government and Police:

Sr. Ministro Roberto Dunn Barreiro
Ministro de Gobierno y Policía
Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía
Espejo y Benalcázar
Quito, ECUADOR

Telegrams: Ministro Gobierno y Policía, Quito, Ecuador

Telexes: 22354 mingob ed

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human rights organization:

Comisión Ecuménica de Derechos Humanos
Apartado 720 A
Quito, ECUADOR

and to diplomatic representatives of Ecuador accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 May 1993.