

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear for Safety

25 October 1993

ECUADOR

Cecilia GUIJARRO (female)

Amnesty International is concerned for the physical safety of Cecilia Guijarro, from Quito, the capital, who according to reports has been threatened by officials said to be working for the Ministry of Defence.

On 7 September 1993 a picket took place in front of the Ministry of Defence protesting the possible "disappearance" by the army of Cecilia Guijarro's eldest son, Nixon Algides Pacheco Guijarro, on 16 January. During this demonstration she made statements to the radio and television, holding the army responsible for her son's alleged "disappearance".

The following day she was reportedly approached by two men dressed in civilian clothes who claimed to be members of the Ministry of Defence. Cecilia Guijarro says that the men offered her money providing she stopped inquiring about her son's whereabouts. She refused the offer and was told she could possibly suffer the same fate as her son. Since then she is reported to have been followed on two other occasions, one time by the same men. Her three younger children also have been followed on several occasions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International frequently receives reports of human rights violations by members of Ecuador's police and by members of the armed forces. Some of these reports are backed by detailed testimonies. These violations appear to take place in conditions of almost total impunity. The authorities repeatedly fail to conduct thorough and independent investigations into the reports. In those few cases where investigations are ordered, they have been carried out by the security force alleged to be responsible for the violation.

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

- expressing concern for the physical safety of Cecilia Guijarro and her three children, following her efforts before the Ministry of Defence to ascertain the whereabouts of her son, Nixon Alcides Pacheco Guijarro;
- expressing concern that she was approached by two men who claimed to be from the Ministry of Defence, and that one of them reportedly told her she could suffer the same fate as her son;
- requesting guarantees for the physical safety of Cecilia Guijarro and assurances that she will be allowed to freely seek information as to her son's whereabouts.

APPEALS TO:

1) President:

Dr. Sixto Durán Ballén
República del Ecuador
Palacio de Gobierno
Quito, ECUADOR

Telexes: 22375/22201 prrep ed

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President

2) Minister of Justice:

General José Gallardo Román
Ministro de Defensa Nacional
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
La Recoleta
Quito, ECUADOR

Faxes: +59 32 580 941

Salutation: Señor General/Dear General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Comisión Ecuménica de Derechos Humanos
Apartado 720 A
Quito
ECUADOR (human rights organization)

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 December 1993.