

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 29/02/92

Distr: UA/SC

Please bring this action to the attention of the person responsible for target sector work in your section

29 January 1992

Further information on UA 15/92 (AMR 29/01/92, 10 January 1992) - Death Threats

EL SALVADOR: Rev. Victoriano Jimeno
 Rev. Medardo Gómez and nine other members of the National
 Council of Churches

and new names: Nuria Esmeralda Meléndez de Grande (f)

and members of various other popular organizations

Amnesty International is concerned that members of the Consejo Nacional de Iglesias (CNI), the National Council of Churches, have continued to receive death threats from the self-styled Ejército Secreto de Salvación Nacional (ESSN), the Secret Army of National Salvation. Rev. Victoriano Jimeno, one of the eleven CNI Executive members threatened in the letter from the ESSN, dated 6 January, received a menacing telephone call at his home on 16 January 1992.

In an alarming development, Nuria Esmeralda Meléndez de Grande, wife of Julio César Grande (CNI administrator and member of the Reformed Church) was reportedly abducted on the morning of 22 January by unidentified armed men on her way to work at the University of El Salvador. Nuria Meléndez was violently forced into a car where she was blindfolded and taken to an unknown location. She was repeatedly questioned about the activities of the CNI and threatened before being released the following evening. While the identity of her captors is not known, the questioning Nuria Meléndez claimed to have been subjected to bears similarities to the interrogation of Roberto Palacios and Ignacio Meza, who were detained in November 1991 and January 1992 respectively, by the Guardia Nacional, the National Guard.

The ESSN issued a renewed round of threats on 24 January to members of popular organizations. The Comité Cristiano Pro Desplazados de El Salvador (CRIPDES), the Christian Committee for the Displaced of El Salvador, reportedly received a taped message by telephone threatening that many leaders of the popular movement would not live to celebrate February 1st, the date for a negotiated ceasefire to begin between the government and the armed opposition to end the 12-year old conflict. CRIPDES was the recipient of numerous death threats in September and October 1991. For further information see UA 314/91 (AMR 29/10/91, 20 September 1991) and follow-ups AMR 29/12/91 of 26 September 1991 and AMR 29/13/91 of 17 October 1991.

The Departamento de Derechos Humanos del Sínodo Luterano Salvadoreño, the Human Rights Department of the Lutheran Synod, presented a formal complaint to the Fiscalía General de la República, Attorney General's Office, immediately after the first death threats to the CNI were received on 7 January but no steps appear to have been taken to investigate their origin.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern at reports of continued death threats against the Consejo Nacional de Iglesias by the Ejercito Secreto de Salvación Nacional and the abduction and interrogation by unidentified armed men on 22 January of Nuria Esmeralda Meléndez de Grande;

- asking what steps the Fiscalía General, Attorney General's Office, and other government bodies have taken to investigate the threats by the ESSN and other forms of harassment directed against both the CNI and other popular organizations, including CRIPDES;

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- stating your belief that the recurrence of such threats has been encouraged by the government's failure to carry out effective investigations into similar threats by clandestine groups in recent months;

- urging that measures be taken by the authorities to ensure that members of the CNI, other christian workers and members of popular organizations are able to carry out their work without threat to their physical safety.

APPEALS TO:

1) Vice Minister of the Presidency:

Lic. Ernesto Altschul
Viceministro de la Presidencia
Ministerio de la Presidencia
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Sr. Viceministro /
Dear Vice-Minister**

Telegrams: Sr. Viceministro Presidencia, San Salvador, El Salvador

Telexes: 30344 RS SAL

Faxes: (503) 22 91 09

2) Attorney for Human Rights:

Lic. José David Campos
Fiscal Adjunto de Derechos Humanos
Fiscalía General de la República
13a Calle Poniente
Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Sr. Fiscal General /
Dear Attorney General**

Telegrams: Fiscalía General, San Salvador, El Salvador

3) President of the Legislative Assembly:

Lic. Luis Roberto Angulo Samayoa
Presidente de la Asamblea Legislativa
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Señor Presidente /
Dear President**

Telegrams: Lic. Presidente Angulo, San Salvador, El Salvador

Telexes: 20532 CEDICE SAL

4) Governmental Human Rights Commission:

Lic. Angel Benjamín Cestoni
Comision de Derechos Humanos, gubernamental
Paseo Gral. Escalón 87
Av. Sur Bloque 2, 226
Colonia Escalón
San Salvador, El Salvador

**Estimado Lic. Cestoni /
Dear Mr Cestoni**

Telegrams: Comision de Derechos Humanos, gubernamental, San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: (503) 24 09 92

COPIES TO:

National Council of Churches:

Consejo Nacional de Iglesias

Apartado Postal 2241

Centro de Gobierno

San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: (503) 24-1461

Comité Cristiano Pro-Desplazados

de El Salvador (CRIPDES)

Apartado Postal 596

San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: (503) 26-3560

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 March 1992.