

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 129/94 Apparent political killing / Fear for safety 30 March 1994

EL SALVADOR Heriberto GALICIA, opposition politician and trade unionist

Heriberto Galicia, an opposition candidate in the recent parliamentary elections, was shot dead on 27 March 1994. His murder adds to the string of killings of opposition figures in the context of the presidential and legislative elections, and heightens Amnesty International's fears for the safety of opposition party members as the electoral process continues.

Heriberto Galicia was shot dead by unidentified individuals near his home in the eastern city of San Miguel. The full circumstances of the killing are as yet unclear. A pro-government newspaper has attributed it to a personal dispute, but fellow members of his party believe there may be a political motive, arguing that Heriberto Galicia had previously received anonymous death threats by telephone.

Seven days earlier he had stood unsuccessfully as candidate for the Legislative Assembly for the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR)*, the National Revolutionary Movement. The MNR forms part of the left-wing electoral alliance which includes *Convergencia Democratica (CD)*, Democratic Convergence and the former armed opposition group *Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN)*, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

Heriberto Galicia was also Industrial Relations Secretary (*Secretario de conflictos*) for the Sugar Workers' Union (*Sindicato de la Industria del Azucar*), as well as Secretary for Labour Mobilization (*Secretario de Movilizacion Obrera*) for the MNR.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since the election campaign began in late 1993, dozens of latirás and members of the FMLN or other opposition parties have been killed or received death threats. Most cases have not been properly investigated, but the pattern of killings suggests they are the work of forces linked to the government or ruling party. A governmental commission known as the *Grupo Conjunto* (Joint Group) will report in May 1994 on apparently political killings by "illegal armed groups" since 1992.

The ruling *Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA)*, Nationalist Republican Alliance, obtained most seats in the parliamentary elections held on 20 March. Presidential elections were also held that day, but will go to a second round on 24 April as the leading candidate, ARENA's Armando Calderon Sol, failed to obtain an absolute majority. Calderon Sol will face the FMLN-CD-MNR candidate, Ruben Zamora, who obtained 26% of the vote in the first round.

The FMLN became a political party under the terms of the 1992 Peace Accords which ended 12 years of bitter armed conflict. The Accords included numerous human rights commitments and reforms; many of the most important, including an enquiry into "death squads" and key judicial reforms, have yet to be implemented.

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

- expressing concern at the killing of Heriberto Galicia, particularly in view of numerous other recent killings of opposition leaders and members;
- requesting that an immediate investigation be carried out into this killing and that those responsible be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to do all that is in their power to guarantee the safety of members of opposition parties, and all participating in the elections, in the run-up to the second round of the presidential elections; - asking to be informed of the measures the government has taken to investigate the series of apparently political killings during the election campaign and to bring to justice those responsible;
- asking what steps it intends to take to comply with the human rights commitments made in the Peace Accords which are still outstanding, such as the inquiry into "death squads" and reforms to make the judiciary more independent and effective in combatting human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

S.E. Alfredo Cristiani Burkard

Presidente de la Republica de El Salvador
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: Presidente Cristiani, San Salvador. El Salvador

Faxes: + 503 810018 / 710950

Telexes: 30344 RS SAL

Salutation: Su Excelencia/Your Excellency

National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights

Dr. Carlos Molina Fonseca
Procurador para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos
Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos
9ª Avda. Norte y 5ª Calle Pte.
Edificio AMSA, N° 535
San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: + 503 71 2886

Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear Dr. Fonseca

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dr. José Manuel Pacas Castro
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Boulevard Manuel Enrique Araujo Km. 6
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores, San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: + 503 98 0334/98 0314

Telexes: 20179 RREE SAL

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS:

Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR) (political party)

Urbanización La Esperanza
Bld. María Cristina, 128
(atras de Caribe Moto)
San Salvador, El Salvador

Sindicato de la Industria Nacional del Azucar (sugar workers' union)

3a calle Oriente, 226,
Edificio Kuri, 3er piso
San Salvador, El Salvador

Please enclose cover letter if possible when copying to above two addresses as the two organizations are unfamiliar with Amnesty International's work.

Diario Latino (opposition newspaper)

6^a Avda. Norte 325
San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: + 503 71 0971

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office if sending appeals after 10 May 1994.