

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 159/99

Fear for Safety / Death threats

12 November 1999

EL SALVADOR

William Hernández, director of a non-governmental organization working with sexual minorities

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of William Hernández after he received a number of telephone death threats on 5 November 1999.

The caller apparently rang his offices three times asking to speak to him and threatening to come to the office to kill him. They said they knew how to get to the office, gave an accurate physical description of him and said *Adigale a ese hijo de puta que no salga esta noche* (Atell that son of a bitch not to leave tonight).

William Hernández is the executive director of the non-governmental organization, *AEntre Amigos* (Between Friends), *Asociación Salvadoreña de Desarrollo Integral para Minorías Sexuales* (Salvadorean Integral Development Association for Sexual Minorities), in the capital, San Salvador. The organization gives sex education to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, as well as to the wider public. It has also spoken out about human rights violations against sexual minorities and the failure of the authorities to investigate such abuses.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

AEntre Amigos have reported several cases of intimidation of and violence against sexual minorities and those involved with the work of the organization: on 7 March 1999, William Hernández was issued with a death threat; during Lesbian and Gay Pride celebrations on 26 June a member of the Presidential Battalion violently threatened a transgender person taking part; a few days later a community member was shot and injured as he stepped out of the *AEntre Amigos* offices with William Hernández.

In August 1999, members of the National Civilian Police in another district beat and insulted six homosexuals, threatening them with death. Several members of sexual minorities were also reportedly killed last year. No thorough investigations are known to have been carried out or anyone brought to trial in connection with these cases.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of William Hernández, executive director of *AEntre Amigos*, after three telephone calls threatening him with death were made to his offices on 5 November 1999;
- calling on the authorities to guarantee his safety;
- asking them to open a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation into the death threats against William Hernández, to make the findings public and to bring those responsible to justice;
- expressing concern about and asking for thorough investigations into threats to and the murder of sexual minorities and those who work with them.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic
S.E. Francisco Flores
Presidente de la República
Casa Presidencial
Avda. Los Diplomáticos,
B1 San Jacinto
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: **Presidente, San Salvador, El Salvador**

Faxes: + 503 281 0018 / 243 4912

E-mails: **webmaster@casapres.gob.sv**

Salutation: **Sr. Presidente / Dear President**

Minister of Interior

Lic. Mario Acosta

Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador
Telegrams: Ministro Interior, San Salvador, El Salvador
Faxes: + 503 281 5959
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Minister of Public Security
Dr. Francisco Bertrand Galindo
Ministro de Seguridad Pública
Ministerio de Seguridad Pública
6a. Calle Oriente y 8a. Avenida Sur, No.42
San Salvador, El Salvador
Telegrams: Ministro Seguridad Pública, San Salvador, El Salvador
Faxes: + 503 271 2022
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

William Hernández
Asociación Entre Amigos, Avenida y Colonia Santa Victoria, No.50
Costado Norte Boulevard de los Héroes, San Salvador, El Salvador.
E-mails: entreamigos@salnet.net; Faxes: + 503 225 4213 / 235 1640

Human Rights Procurator
Lic. Eduardo Peñate Polanco
Procurador de Derechos Humanos
Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (PDDH)
9a. Avenida Norte y 5a. Calle Poniente, Edificio AMSA, No. 535
San Salvador, El Salvador.
E-mails: dipddh@gob.sv; Faxes: + 503 271 2886

National Newspapers
El Diario De Hoy, 11 Calle Oriente, 271, San Salvador, El Salvador
Faxes: + 503 271 3329; E-mails: redaccion@elsalvador.com

La Prensa Gráfica, Final Boulevard Sta Elena, Calle Conchagua
Antiguo Cuscatlan, Dpto de la Libertad, San Salvador, El Salvador
Faxes: + 503 289 1802/1; E-mails: lpg@laprensa.com.sv

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 23 December 1999.