

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear for safety

14 February 1995

GUATEMALA Senayda CANA CHANAY (f), aged 36, human rights activist

Senayda Cana Chanay, in hospital after an attempt against her life, has reported that she has been visited and questioned in an intimidating manner by a member of the armed forces, and harassed by police assigned to protect her. Amnesty International fears for her safety as it believes the attack against her may have been an attempted extrajudicial execution. Senayda Cana is a longstanding member of the *Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo por el Aparecimiento con Vida de Nuestros Familiares* (GAM), Mutual Support Group for the Appearance of Our Relatives Alive.

At 4.00am on 6 February 1995, Senayda Cana was gunned down as she was leaving her home in the village of Parajo, Buena Esperanza, municipality of San Martín Jilotepeque. She says that her attacker was heavily armed and had his face concealed. She believes there were others, but because it was dark, she was unable to identify how many. She was shot four times and left for dead. Seriously injured, she was taken to hospital in San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango department, and is now reportedly out of danger from her injuries.

On the night of 6 February, unidentified men knocked on the door of Senayda Cana's home while her four children were inside. The children did not answer as it was late. Members of Peace Brigades International are currently accompanying the children for their protection.

In the hospital, a man identifying himself as a member of the armed forces from the Chimaltenango military base, has visited Senayda Cana and questioned her about her membership of GAM. She considered his attitude and demeanour intimidating. She has also reported that members of the *Policía Nacional* (National Police) assigned to protect her have been harassing her, saying that she would be sent directly from hospital to the *Granja Penal de Pavón* (Pavón Prison).

On 5 February, the day before the attack, Senayda Cana had been followed by a man on a motorcycle as she was returning home from her weekly shopping trip to San Martín Jilotepeque. The man, who is known by the community to be a member of the G-2 military intelligence attached to the Chimaltenango military base, was waiting while she boarded the bus in San Martín Jilotepeque, and followed her until she got off the bus. As she approached her home, the man asked her about her intention to visit GAM head office in Guatemala City, on 7 February.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Senayda Cana has been a member and representative of GAM in her village since 1984 and is involved in organizing human rights education. She had attended a GAM meeting in the village on 3 February, three days before the attack. She had not previously received death threats.

GAM, which was formed in June 1984, is made up of relatives of "disappeared" people attempting to determine the fate of their missing family members. Two of its founding members were killed in 1985 in circumstances strongly suggesting official involvement and its leadership and members have continued to be targeted by the security forces and subjected to human rights violations

including, extrajudicial execution, "disappearance", threats and harassment.

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

- expressing concern about the attempt on the life of GAM member Senayda Cana Chanay on 6 February 1995, in circumstances suggesting an attempted extrajudicial execution;
- seeking assurances that the safety of Senayda Cana Chanay and her children be guaranteed;
- expressing concern at reports that a member of the armed forces intimidated her in hospital, and that members of the National Police, assigned to protect her, have harassed her;
- asking that these incidents be immediately and thoroughly investigated and that those responsible be brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO**

1) President of the Republic:

S.E. Ramiro de León Carpio  
 Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Telegrams: Presidente de León Carpio, Guatemala**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 537472/515667**  
**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /Dear President**

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Carlos Enrique Reynoso  
 Ministro de Gobernación,  
 Ministerio de Gobernación  
 Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8  
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 518105**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

3) Minister of Defence:

Gral. Mario Enríquez Morales  
 Ministro de Defensa  
 Ministerio de Defensa  
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa, Guatemala**  
**Faxes: + 502 2 537472**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

4) Attorney General

Lic. Ramses Cuestas Gómez  
 Fiscal General de la Nación  
 Ministerio Público  
 18 Calle 10-36, Zona 1  
 Guatemala, GUATEMALA  
**Faxes: + 502 2 537554; + 502 2 530482**  
**Telegrams: Fiscal General, Guatemala**  
**Salutation: Sr. Fiscal General / Dear Attorney General**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Commander of Chimaltenango Military Base

Sr. Comandante  
Base Militar No. 3  
Chimaltenango, Chimaltenango  
El Quiché, Guatemala

Human Rights Procurator

Lic. Jorge García Laguardia  
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos  
12 Avenida 12-72  
Zona 1, Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Human Rights Group

Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo por el Aparecimiento  
con Vida de Nuestros Familiares (GAM)  
8a. Calle 7-46, Zona 1  
Pasaje Fénix  
Apartamento 15, Ofic. 5  
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 29 March 1995.