

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 31/94 Death Threats / Fear for Safety

31 January 1994

GUATEMALA Juan Enrique QUIÑONEZ SCHWANK, aged 33

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Juan Enrique Quiñonez Schwank who has reportedly been subjected to repeated death threats. He is Technical Director of the *Asociación para el Desarrollo para América Central (ADEPAC)*, Association for the Development of Central America, and member of the Executive Committee of the *Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas para el Acompañamiento de la Población Damnificada por el Conflicto Armado Interno*, Coordination of NGOs and Cooperatives for the accompaniment of victims of the internal armed conflict. Both organizations are concerned with the issue of Guatemalan refugees.

According to reports, since 25 December 1993 Juan Quiñonez has received seven telephone death threats and one written threat. On 25 and 31 December 1993 and on 17 January 1994 threatening calls were received by Juan Quiñonez at his home and on 18 January at the offices of ADEPAC. On 20 January calls were made to his home and the offices of ADEPAC in which a recorded message was played stating "You have until 31 January to leave the country .. if you remain here, we will respond .. this is your final warning" ("*Tiene hasta el 31 de enero para que abandone el país .. si persiste aquí responderemos .. esta es la advertencia final*"). The same recorded message was played over the telephone at the ADEPAC offices on 24 January 1994.

A written threat was delivered to the house of Juan Quiñonez in the early hours of 27 January 1994 in which he was given until 31 January 1994 to leave the country or face the consequences. The note which was signed in the name of a group calling itself the *Liga Anticomunista Guatemalteca*, the Guatemalan Anticommunist League, also accused him of being a commander of the *Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca*, (URNG) Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity.

A denunciation has been made to the Human Rights Procurator.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tens of thousands of Guatemalans, many of them indigenous peasants, fled Guatemala in the late 1970s and early 1980s, escaping the Guatemalan army's scorched earth counter-insurgency campaign which claimed many thousands of non-combatant victims. Many of the refugees fled to Mexico.

Guatemalan refugees began to return from Mexico in January 1993. It has been estimated that there may be as many as 95,000 refugees in Mexico, 80% of which may want to return. However, some of those involved in the returns have been subjected to threats, harassment and ill-treatment. On 25 February 1993 Carlos

Ranferi Gómez, Deputy Secretary of the Quetzaltenango Workers' Union (UTQ), was attacked by armed men who took away his video camera, audio and photographic materials which he had brought back from a recent visit to the *Comunidades de Población en Resistencia* (CPR), Communities of people in Resistance, and the resettlements in Ixcán for refugees recently returned from Mexico. The assailants then shot him and ran away.

On 27 August 1993 Joaquín Jiménez Bautista, a coordinator of the *Asociación de Refugiados Dispersos de Guatemala* (ARDIGUA), Association of Dispersed Refugees of Guatemala, who had returned to Guatemala from Mexico, was detained by members of a civil defence patrol. While held in detention by armed men, he was reportedly beaten and kicked until unconscious. He was later released and he returned to Mexico.

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

- expressing concern about the threats received by Juan Enrique Quiñonez Schwank;
- urging that measures be taken to ensure his physical safety;
- asking for an immediate investigation into these death threats and that those found 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, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 537472, + 502 2 519702
Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU
Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /Dear President

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Arnoldo Ortiz Moscoso
 Ministro de Gobernación
 Ministerio de Gobernación
 Despacho Ministerial, Of. No. 8
 Palacio Nacional, Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala
Faxes: + 502 2 515 368
Telexes: 5085 MINGOB
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, Guatemala
Fax: + 502 2 515 252 / 537 472
Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas
Edificio Atanacio Tzul (Segundo Nivel)
40 Av. y 2ª Calle
Zona 7, Lote 14
Residenciales "Valle del Sol"
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Archbishop's Human Rights Office
Oficina de Derechos Humanos del
Arzobispado de Guatemala (ODHAG)
Apartado Postal 723
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 14 March 1994.