

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Ill-Treatment of Street Children

GUATEMALA

Felipe GONZÁLEZ ("Chiripa", aged 14)

José CORRADO MENDOZA ("Olindo", aged 18)

Amnesty International is concerned at reports that an attack in which 14-year-old Felipe González and 18-year-old José Corrado Mendoza were severely beaten by two unidentified men, has not been investigated vigorously by the police, suggesting possible connivance on their part.

At about 10 pm on Monday 20 January 1992, Felipe González and José Corrado Mendoza were walking together with Ludwin Gutiérrez, aged 16, along 11th Avenue between 12th and 13th street in zone 1 of Guatemala City, when two unidentified men wearing civilian clothes ran out of a house. The men reportedly stopped the street children without an apparent reason and threatened them at gunpoint. According to information received by Amnesty International, Ludwin Gutiérrez managed to escape while the unidentified men started to hit Felipe González and José Corrado Mendoza in the head and in other parts of their bodies with their guns. After the two men went away, the two children were reportedly left bleeding on the pavement, and were helped by a passer-by who alerted the Fire Brigade. The children were taken unconscious to the San Juan de Dios General Hospital, where they stayed overnight.

Felipe González is said to be unable to open his eyes and has to be led by hand, due to the fact that his face is very swollen.

Moreover, Amnesty International is concerned at the alleged refusal of the National Police to investigate the incident until a judge issues them an order to do so, and at reports indicating that unidentified persons have cleaned the blood stains from the pavement where the children were found unconscious, thereby destroying potential incriminating evidence.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Over the past two years, Amnesty International has received an escalating number of reports of human rights violations against street children in Guatemala City, including beatings, torture, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions, reportedly carried out by official security force agents, particularly the police, acting sometimes in plain clothes and sometimes in uniform. In other cases, abuses have been carried out by agents of private security firms (see Guatemala: Extrajudicial Executions and Human Rights Violations against Street Children, AMR 34/37/90 of August 1990, which documented many of these cases).

Approximately 62 legal suits against more than 50 national and private police are currently pending with the Guatemalan courts and only in isolated cases have investigations resulted in the prosecution of those responsible. Children who have witnessed or given information concerning abuses directed against other street children have been subjected to reprisals, and those working with street children have also been subjected to harassment and intimidation. On 18 December 1991 Francisco Tziac, aged 16, was abducted and beaten by two unidentified men in Guatemala City. He witnessed the killing of his friend, Nahamán

Carmona who was attacked by four policemen on 14 March 1990 and died as a result (see UA 07/92, AI Index AMR 34/02/92). The four policemen were subsequently brought to trial and sentenced to prison terms of between 10 to 15 years. However in July 1991, the sentences were overturned and the policemen remain in prison pending a re-trial.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/telephone calls/faxes/airmail letters:**

- asking for an immediate and thorough investigation into the incident in which Felipe González and José Corrado Mendoza were severely beaten by two unidentified men;
- asking that the result of the investigation be made public and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- asking that immediate and adequate measures be taken to protect the safety of Felipe González and José Corrado Mendoza, as well as other street children.

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**APPEALS TO:**

1) President:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams:** Presidente Serrano, Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telexes:** 5331 CAPRES GU  
**Faxes:** + 502 2 537472; + 502 2 519702  
**Tel No:** + 502 2 21212, + 502 2 22266  
**Salutation:** Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente  
/Dear President

2) Minister of Interior:

Lic. Fernando Hurtado Prem  
Ministro de Gobernación  
Despacho Ministerial  
Oficina No. 8, Primer Nivel  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams:** Ministro Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telexes:** 5085 MINGOB GU  
**Faxes:** + 502 2 518105  
**Tel No:** + 502 2 21212, ext 500; 518105-6  
**Salutation:** Señor Ministro/Dear Minister

3) Minister of Defence:

Gral. Jorge García Samayoa  
Jefe del Estado Mayor de Defensa Nacional  
Ministerio de Defensa  
Palacio Nacional  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telegrams:** Ministro Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Telexes:** 5361 COMGUA GU  
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**Tel No:** + 502 2 21212, ext 2226  
**Salutation:** Señor Ministro/Dear Minister

4) Attorney General:

Señor Acisclo Valladares  
Procurador General de la Nación  
Procuraduría General de la Nación  
18 Calle 10-36  
Zona 1, Guatemala  
Guatemala  
**Telegrams:** Procurador General, Guatemala, Guatemala  
**Tel No:** + 502 2 64697, + 502 2 313656  
or  
+ 502 2 518385  
**Salutation:** Señor Procurador General/Dear Attorney General

**COPIES TO:**

Human Rights Procurator in charge of children:

Lic. Eunice Lima  
Procuradora de Menores  
Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos  
Avenida Simeón Cañas, 10-61  
Zona 2, Guatemala  
Guatemala

Casa Alianza  
Apartado Postal 2704,  
Guatemala, Guatemala

Pro-children Commission of Congress:

Señor Presidente  
Comisión Pro-Niñez  
Congreso de la República  
7ta Avenida y 9a Calle  
Zona 1, Ciudad de Guatemala  
Guatemala

Newspaper:

Diario Prensa Libre  
13 Calle 9-31, 50 Nivel  
Edificio Prensa Libre

Zona 1  
Guatemala, Guatemala  
and to diplomatic representatives of  
Guatemala in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, on your section  
office, if sending appeals after 9 March 1992.