

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 242/91 Deaths Threats/Harassment against Trade Unionists 16 July 1991

GUATEMALA: Rosendo DE LEÓN
(accent on o of Leon)
Mauricio RAXCACOJ

Amnesty International is concerned at the recent series of deaths threats received by two workers of the Tipografía Nacional (State Printing Press), Rosendo de León and Mauricio Raxcacoj. Rosendo de León is also the Secretary General of the Sindicato de la Tipografía Nacional (the State Printing Press trade union) and Mauricio Raxcacoj is a member of the Consejo Consultivo (Consultive Council) of the same trade union, which is an affiliate of the Federación Nacional de Sindicatos de Trabajadores del Estado de Guatemala (FENASTEG), National Federation of Guatemalan State Workers' Unions.

According to the information received by Amnesty International, the two trade unionists have been receiving telephone threats and have reported being followed since April 1991, when they denounced cases of official corruption inside the Tipografía Nacional, which is a dependency of the Ministerio de Gobernación (the Interior Ministry). On Thursday 6 June 1991, Mauricio Raxcacoj was going to his home in Zone 1 in Guatemala City, when two men reportedly stopped him, beat him and told him to stop making accusations.

Other members of FENASTEG have also received threats in the last few months. In a recent incident, a call was reportedly made to FENASTEG headquarters by an unidentified man threatening "les vamos a quebrar el culo por andar en las actividades sindicales" ("We are going to get you for being involved in trade union activities").

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Trade unionists and members of popular movements have been targeted since the government of Jorge Serrano Elías took office in January 1991 in a renewed wave of human rights violations. Amnesty International has learned of a large number of threats, intimidation, abduction and torture as well as possible extrajudicial execution against trade union leaders and members of popular movements in recent months (see *Guatemala: Trade Unionists and Political Activists Targeted under the New Government of June 1991*, AI Index: AMR 34/28/91). The choice of the victim and the manner in which these abuses have been carried out suggest the involvement of the security forces in the guise of the so-called "death squads". Over twenty trade unionists have been forced to leave the country as a result of direct threats or other human rights violations against themselves and their colleagues and because of the failure of the government to take preventive action.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the threats made against Rosendo de León and Mauricio Raxcacoj;
- asking that these threats and the incident in which Mauricio Raxcacoj was beaten be investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- asking that adequate steps be taken to protect Rosendo de León and Mauricio

Raxcacoj as well as all those involved in trade unions and popular movements.

APPEALS TO:

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías
(Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente)
 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
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Lic. Fernando Hurtado Prem
(Salutation: Señor Ministro)
 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
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Señor Acisclo Valladares
(Salutation: Señor Procurador General)
 Procurador General de la Nación
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 18 Calle 10-36
 Zona 1, Guatemala, Guatemala
Telegrams: Procurador General, Guatemala, Guatemala
Tel No: + 502 2 64697; + 502 2 313656; + 502 2 518385

COPIES TO:

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 Procurador de Derechos Humanos
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 Zona 2,
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Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala (UNSI TRAGUA)
 11 Calle 8-14, 3er Nivel
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 Zona 1, Guatemala, Guatemala

Padre Andrés Girón León
 Presidente
 Comisión de Derechos Humanos
 Congreso Nacional de la República
 9 Av. 9-48, Zona 1
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 7a Avenida 11-79
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and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 August 1991.