

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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THIS IS A PRIORITY UA

**UA 293 /91 Possible Extrajudicial Execution
and Death Threats**

30 August 1991

**GUATEMALA: Marlon Alexander SCOTT MOLINA - student
Amílcar MENDOZA - student
Edwin Giovanni HIDALGO JEREZ - Trade Unionist**

Amnesty International is seriously concerned at the possible extrajudicial execution of two students and one trade unionist, which took place in the early morning of 25 August 1991 in Guatemala City. Amnesty International is also concerned for the safety of the leadership of the Asociación de Estudiantes Universitarios (AEU), University Students Association, who have recently been receiving anonymous telephone threats.

At 3.00am on the morning of 25 August, Marlon Alexander Scott Molina and Amílcar Mendoza, both students at the Faculty of Architecture at the Universidad de San Carlos (USAC), San Carlos University, along with Edwin Giovanni Hidalgo Jerez, an electrical worker and member of the Sindicato de Trabajadores del Instituto Nacional de Electrificación (STINDE), Electrical Workers Union, were reportedly shot and killed as they were walking on the street in Zone 5 of Guatemala City. All three bodies showed signs of having been given a tiro de gracia (a finishing shot in the head). One of the students, Marlon Scott was taken to hospital, but was dead on arrival. The other two died instantly.

Marlon Alexander Scott Molina and Amílcar Mendoza were also members of the AEU. The AEU has in the past few months been receiving a series of death threats. Most recently, AEU leaders reported that in mid-August they received anonymous telephone calls warning that four of their leaders were going to die. The AEU believes that the security forces may have been responsible for the three killings because of the manner in which they were carried out. Amnesty International has also learned that three student leaders of the Coordinadora de Estudiantes de Educación Media (CEEM), High School Students Coordinating Committee, were being harassed and threatened by armed men. The CEEM attribute the threats to CEEM demands for adequate funding for secondary schools. Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the membership and leadership of the AEU and the CEEM.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Student organizations have been continually targeted under successive regimes in Guatemala. Amnesty International has documented scores of cases of students and their leaders who have been extrajudicially executed or "disappeared" under military and civilian governments over the past 30 years. In August and September 1989, at least 12 students and staff from the USAC were "disappeared", seven of whom were subsequently found dead. A number of the victims were reportedly leaders of the AEU. (See Guatemala: Human Rights Violations Directed against Student Leaders, AI Index: AMR 34/52/89 of September 1989).

In July 1991 Amnesty International expressed concern for the safety of AEU

leaders, Otto Peralta and Carmen Reyna. They had been repeatedly questioned by men posing as members of the Criminal Investigations Department of the National Police about their participation at the 47th General Assembly United Nations (UN) Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Switzerland, where they had given evidence to the Human Rights Commission on the situation of human rights in Guatemala in February 1991 (See UA 247/91, AI Index: AMR 34/32/91 of 19 July 1991).

President Jorge Serrano Elías took office in Guatemala in January 1991. During his presidential campaign he had pledged to ensure protection of human rights. However, Amnesty International remains seriously concerned at what appears to be serious deterioration in the human rights situation in the country in past months, including an increased number of killings, death threats, torture and "disappearances". As in past years, the choice of victim and the manner in which the abuses have been carried out suggest the involvement of members of the official security forces.

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

- expressing concern at the possible extrajudicial execution of Marlon Alexander Scott Molina, Amílcar Mendoza and Edwin Giovanni Hidalgo Jerez;
- expressing concern also at the threats directed against the AEU leadership and the CEEM;
- asking for an immediate investigation into the killings and threats, that the results be made public and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- asking for guarantees for the safety of the membership and leadership of the AEU and CEEM.

APPEALS TO

1.

Lic. Fernando Hurtado Prem **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

2.

Gral. Luis Francisco Mendoza García **Señor Ministro**
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala

Telegrams: Ministro Defensa Mendoza, Guatemala, Guatemala

Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

Faxes: + 502 2 537472

3.

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías **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

4.
Señor Acisclo Valladares **Señor Procurador General**
Procurador General de la Nación
Procuraduría General de la Nación
18 Calle 10-36
Zona 1, Guatemala
Guatemala
Telegrams: Procurador General, Guatemala, Guatemala

5.
Sra. María Luisa Beltranena de Padilla **Señora Ministro**
Ministro de Educación
Ministerio de Educación
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala
Telegrams: Ministro Educacion Beltranena, Guatemala,
Guatemala

COPIES TO:

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de Derechos Humanos
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-61
Zona 2, Guatemala
Guatemala

Lic. Roderico Segura Trujillo
Rector
Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC)
Ciudad Universitaria
Zona 12, Guatemala
Guatemala

Señores
Asociación de Estudiantes Universitarios (AEU)
Ciudad Universitaria
Zona 12, Guatemala
Guatemala

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 11 October 1991.