

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Harassment/Fear for safety

29 July 1993

GUATEMALA:

**Fernando René DE LEÓN SOLANO, aged 38, human rights
activist**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Fernando René de León Solano who has recently been persecuted and threatened in Guatemala city, the capital. He is Secretary of the Executive Board of the Asociación Guatemalteca de Juristas (AGJ), Guatemalan Association of Jurists, a non-governmental human rights organization.

According to reports, at the beginning of July 1993, as he was leaving the AGJ headquarters, Fernando de León noticed two men in civilian clothes, wearing military boots and with military haircuts, standing on the street corner. When they saw Fernando de León they quickly hid themselves around the corner and then reappeared several times as if trying to be noticed.

Subsequently, on 11 July a trade unionist named Walter Manuel Najera Molina was reportedly abducted, held for several hours and then freed. The following day, 12 July, Walter Najera visited Fernando de León at his office, and told him that he had been threatened with death while being interrogated. He claimed to have been questioned about several people, including Fernando de León, whom the abductors assured him had links with the armed opposition.

On the evening of 20 July as Fernando de León left his office he noticed the same two men that he had seen before, who proceeded to approach him. He crossed to the other side of the road and quickened his pace and the two men apparently retreated.

The following day a woman reportedly arrived at the office of Fernando de León, claiming to be from the Funerales Reforma Sociedad Anónima, a company of undertakers, and that her visit was due to an anonymous telephone call stating that a funeral service may be necessary for Fernando de León. On 23 July another employee of the same undertakers came to the AGJ offices claiming that someone had called asking for a burial service for Fernando de León.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 6 June 1993 Ramiro de León Carpio, previously the Human Rights Procurator, was voted President, almost unanimously, by Congress to serve out the remaining term of President Jorge Serrano Elías. Ex-President Serrano had been forced from office after trying to seize near-dictatorial powers on 25 May 1993.

For many years Amnesty International has been concerned about human rights violations directed against targeted groups, including trade unionists, student

leaders, journalists and those working with non-governmental organizations, particularly those attempting to investigate and protect human rights. They have been long-term targets of abuses in Guatemala, including harassment, threats, torture, "disappearances", and extrajudicial executions. Such abuses have sometimes been preceded by acts of intimidation and surveillance.

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

- expressing concern at the harassment and threats received by Fernando René de León Solano;

- asking that these incidents be immediately investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice;

- asking for guarantees for the security of Fernando René de León Solano.

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 518105

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

Faxes: + 502 2 537472

Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Human Rights Procurator:

Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Lic. Jorge García Laguardia

Procurador de los Derechos Humanos

12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1,

Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Faxes: + 502 2 81734

2) Head of the Presidential Commission

Coordinating the Policies of the

Executive relating to Human Rights:

Presidente

COPREDEH

15 Avenida 18-38, Zona 13

3) 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 9 September 1993.