

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/20/98
1 April 1998

UA 101/98

Fear for safety / Death in custody

MEXICO	Erminio Sánchez Sixto	}	
	Emiliano Sánchez Sixto	}	
	Feliciano Pérez Nájera	}	Fear for safety
	Seferino Sixto	}	
	Feliciano Téllez	}	
	Cenobio Sixto Santos		Death in custody

There are serious concerns for the safety of five people, Erminio Sánchez Sixto, Emiliano Sánchez Sixto, Feliciano Pérez Nájera, Seferino Sixto and Feliciano Téllez, who were reportedly detained by members of the Mexican Federal Army during a house raid in Barrio Nuevo San José, municipality of Tlacoachistlahuaca, Guerrero State on 26 March 1998.

17-year-old Cenobio Sixto Santos reportedly died as a direct result of a severe beating by soldiers during the raid. Erminio Sánchez Sixto is believed to have had his legs and ribs broken.

The Mexican Federal Army entered the Barrio Nuevo San José community on the morning of 26 March and raided several houses, allegedly searching for arms. At 6pm the same day, a Mexican Federal Army helicopter arrived and took Erminio Sánchez Sixto, Emiliano Sánchez Sixto, Feliciano Pérez Nájera, Seferino Sixto and Feliciano Téllez away to an unknown destination.

It is unclear where the body of Cenobio Sixto Santos has been taken or whether it has been subjected to an independent autopsy.

Members of the Barrio Nuevo San José community are understood to have filed a complaint before the authorities regarding the incident.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Barrio Nuevo San José is in an area known as a stronghold for peasant and indigenous rights activists. Amnesty International has documented a systematic pattern of human rights violations against peasant and indigenous activists by members of the security forces as well as by paramilitary groups in the states of Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas.

Many cases of abuse have occurred in the context of counter-insurgency operations in which security forces have linked indigenous activists to the armed opposition groups *Ejército Popular Revolucionario* (EPR), Popular Revolutionary Army, based in Guerrero and Oaxaca States, and the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN), Zapatista Army of National Liberation, based in Chiapas State.

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

- urging that appropriate measures be taken to guarantee the safety of Erminio Sánchez Sixto, Emiliano Sánchez Sixto, Feliciano Pérez Nájera, Seferino Sixto and Feliciano Téllez;
- urging the authorities to immediately make public their whereabouts and to ensure that they have immediate access to doctors, lawyers and their relatives;
- urging that they be charged with a recognizable criminal offence or be promptly released;

- calling for a prompt, independent and full investigation into the manner, cause and circumstances surrounding the death of Cenobio Sixto Santos, for the findings to be made public, and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Guerrero State

Lic. Angel Eladio Aguirre Rivero

Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero

Palacio de Gobierno, Plaza Central, Primer Congreso de Anahuac

Chilpancingo 39000, Estado de Guerrero, MEXICO

Telegrams: Gobernador del Estado, Guerrero, México

Fax: + 52 747 2 8319

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador/ Dear Governor

Attorney General of Guerrero State

Lic. Servando Alanis Santos

Procurador del Estado de Guerrero

Carretera México-Acapulco Km. 6300

Chilpancingo 39000

Estado de Guerrero

MEXICO

Telegrams: Procurador del Estado, Guerrero, México

Fax: + 52 747 22328

Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear State Attorney

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organisation

Centro de Derechos Humanos

"Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" A.C.

Serapio Rendon 57-B

Col. San Rafael, 06470

México D.F. MEXICO

Congressional Human Rights Commission

Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Congreso,

Edificio del Congreso de la Nación,

Avenida del Congreso,

Edificio A, 2 nivel,

Mexico D.F., MEXICO

Fax: + 52 554 23247

and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 May 1998.