

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/42/96

UA 197/96

Fear for safety

7 August 1996

**MEXICO** Pedro Eligio Cabañas, member of a peasant organization  
Daniel Sandoval, "  
Erangelio Mendoza, "  
Joel García, "

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There are serious concerns for the safety of the people named above, members of the *Frente Amplio para la Construcción del Movimiento para la Liberación Nacional*, (FAC-MLN), Broad Front for the Construction of the Movement National Liberation and of commission negotiating between the FAC-MLN and the government of Guerrero State. The atmosphere in Guerrero at present is extremely tense: members of peasant organizations are being arrested and threatened, apparently in connection with their activities on behalf of the local peasant population (see background information).

At 12:45 pm on 5 August 1996, Pedro Eligio Cabañas was beaten about the face and body before being bundled into a car by three members of the *Policía Judicial Federal* (PJF), Federal Judicial Police, in Chilpancingo, the capital of Guerrero State. Daniel Sandoval, Erangelio Mendoza and Joel García witnessed the incident as they were leaving, along with Pedro Eligio Cabañas, the Governmental Palace, (*Palacio de Gobierno*), after a meeting with the Guerrero State authorities.

Amnesty International is extremely concerned for the safety of Pedro Eligio Cabañas and the three witnesses to the incident.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since the massacre of 17 peasants on 28 June 1995 in Aguas Blancas in an ambush staged by Guerrero State police and government officials (see UA 159/95, AMR 41/15/95, 5 July 1995, and follow-ups), the climate of violence in the state has intensified. On 28 June 1996, relatives belonging to different peasant organizations held a memorial service commemorating the massacre, at which a previously unknown armed opposition group, the *Ejército Revolucionario Popular* (ERP), People's Revolutionary Army, made an appearance. Since then, hundreds of police have arrived in Guerrero State. There have been continual reports of threats, intimidation, ill-treatment and massive arrests against members of local communities, as troops and police search homes and vehicles for weapons and ERP members.

Members of an Amnesty International delegation, who visited Guerrero State and met with several members of peasant organizations in October 1995 and June 1996, were able to confirm the reports of violent repression against peasants and human rights workers, who have been active in promoting and protecting the rights of the poorest sectors of the Mexican population, most often peasants and indigenous people (see EXTRA 103/96, AMR 41/34/96, 5 July 1996 and follow up).

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

- expressing your fears for the safety of Pedro Eligio Cabañas, reportedly ill-treated and abducted by members of the Federal Judicial Police in connection with his activities on behalf of the local indigenous and peasant population; urging an immediate investigation into the allegations and that anyone found responsible be brought to justice;

- if Pedro Eligio Cabañas is in detention, seeking guarantees for his physical safety; urging that he be charged with a recognizable criminal offence or released;
- urging that, if in detention, he be granted immediate access to doctors, lawyers and relatives;
- calling for the protection of Daniel Sandoval, Evangelio Mendoza and Joel García, witnesses of the ill-treatment and abduction of their college;
- expressing deep alarm about continuing human rights violations in the state of Guerrero, and the apparent lack of effective action to stop them and to end the impunity currently enjoyed by most perpetrators.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) Guerrero State Attorney

Lic. Antonio Hernández Díaz

Procurador del Estado de Guerrero

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CP 39.000, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, MEXICO.

**Telegrams: Sr. Procurador, Guerrero, México**

**Faxes: + 52 747 223 28 (voice line: ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")**

**Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear Attorney**

2) Interim Governor of the State of Guerrero

Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero

Gobernador Interino del Estado de Guerrero

Palacio de Gobierno

Plaza Primer Congreso de Anahuac

39000 Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico

**Telegrams: Gobernador Aguirre, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico**

**Faxes: + 52 747 23072 (voice line: ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")**

**Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor**

**COPIES TO:**

1) daily newspaper

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2) human rights organization

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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 18 September 1996.