

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PERU @"DISAPPEARED" PERSON FALLS FROM THIRD FLOOR OF POLICE STATION

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Amnesty International is concerned about the reported torture by the police of 16-year-old William Quinto Rojas, and his subsequent "disappearance" following his re-detention after a fall from the third floor of a police building in Huancayo, Junín department, possibly in an attempt to escape.

On the morning of 29 June 1990 William Quinto was reportedly abducted in the town of Huancayo and taken away in an unmarked car by a group of armed men who were hooded and dressed in civilian clothing. His abduction was witnessed by several persons, including one of William Quinto's brothers. On the same day his family reported the abduction to the Policía Nacional, the National Police, in Chapuca and Huancayo.

Three days later, on 2 July, a youth was reported to have fallen or jumped from an upper floor of a building housing the Séptima Comandancia de la Policía Nacional, the Seventh Command's Headquarters of the National Police, and the police-run Oficina Regional de Información (ORI), the Regional Office of Information. A crowd of pedestrians and two police officers from the National Police gathered round him. The youth said he was William Quinto and gave his name, address and a telephone number to the crowd, and added that he had been detained under a false name and tortured. He asked that his family be contacted. Two other men dressed in civilian clothing then approached the crowd and re-detained William Quinto, taking him back into the building from which he had fallen.

An eye witness to the events on 2 July contacted William Quinto's mother with information about the incident. On that day she inquired at the police building as to her son's whereabouts. On showing a photograph of her son, the two officers from the National Police who had earlier joined the crowd confirmed to the mother that it was her son who had suffered the fall, but denied that he had been arrested by the National Police. They reportedly told her that William Quinto had been detained by officers working for ORI located on the third floor. Police officers in the ORI denied to the mother all knowledge of William Quinto.

The following day, on 3 July, the mother went to the police building with a Provincial Prosecutor. According to reports, the Commander of the National Police denied to the Prosecutor that William Quinto was being held, but confirmed that another person had fallen from an upper floor. On leaving the building,

however, the Prosecutor was approached by a person claiming to be one of the two National Police officers who joined the crowd following William Quinto's alleged fall. This officer is reported to have told the Prosecutor that the person who fell from an upper floor was in fact William Quinto. The Prosecutor apparently failed to take note of this officer's statement, claiming he needed authorization to do so.

The torture and "disappearance" of William Quinto has been denounced to the Public Prosecutor's office in Huancayo and to the Human Rights Commission of the Chamber of Deputies in Lima, the capital. To Amnesty International's knowledge no police or judicial investigation has yet been initiated into the allegations of torture or the reported "disappearance".

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