URGENT ACTION **amnesty international** URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England

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*Amnesty International opposes by all appropriate means the imposition and infliction of death penalties and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of prisoners or other detained or restricted persons whether or not they have used or advocated violence.*
*(Amnesty International Statute, Article 1(c))*

UA 88/81 Fear of torture/extra-judicial killing 15 April 1981

EL SALVADOR: (1) Manuel de Jesus RODRIGUEZ RUIZ
(2) 20 trade union leaders

(1) AI has received reports that Manuel de Jesus Rodriguez Ruiz, aged 21, was abducted by agents of the National Guard (*Guardia Nacional*) in San Salvador on 4 April 1981. According to reports, he was blindfolded and taken away in a car. There has since been no news of his whereabouts and there is very serious concern about his safety.

(2) On 9 April 1981 20 trade union leaders in the textile industry who were meeting in a factory in San Salvador were arrested by agents of the National Guard. So far, the names of three of those arrested are known:

Miguel Angel AZUCENA

Alejandro Antonio CARRANZA

Alfonso REIME MELENDEZ (Secretary General of the union)

The present whereabouts of the 20 trade unionists are not known. There are fears that they may "disappear" and be killed if their detention is not officially acknowledged.

Background information

Thousands of Salvadorians have been killed over the past year. The government attributes the deaths to murder by unofficial groups or to fighting between government and guerrilla forces. However, Amnesty International has accumulated unequivocable evidence that there is a consistent pattern of killing by the security forces of peasants, young people and other victims who have not been involved in guerrilla activities.

On 9 April 1981 Amnesty International sent a telegram to the Salvadorian authorities urging them to investigate the reported massacre on 7 April 1981 of more than 20 people in a suburb of San Salvador. Witnesses told reporters that the killings were carried out by the National Guard and the police. At the same time Amnesty International called on the government of El Salvador to guarantee the safety of 138 people named on an apparent death list published by the Salvadorian army in early April 1981. The list includes the names of priests, human rights activists, university rectors and former members of the government.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: *A limited number of appeals only is required; please organize only a few appeals per UA group.*

(1) Telegrams/express letters requesting clarification of the whereabouts and legal situation of Manuel de Jesus Rodriguez Ruiz, and urging the government to do everything possible to ensure his physical safety.

.../...

(2) Telegrams/express letters asking for clarification of the whereabouts and legal situation of the 20 trade unionists arrested on 9 April, including Miguel Angel Azucena, Alejandro Antonio Carranza and Alfonso Reime Melendez, and urging the government to guarantee their physical safety.

APPEALS TO:

Col. Dem. Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova
Director de la Guardia Nacional
Colonia Atlactl
San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Uno más Uno (Mexican newspaper)
Miguel Angel 94
Mexico 19 DF
Mexico

and to Salvadorian diplomatic representatives in your own country.

FINAL DATE FOR ACTION: 16 May 1981

☐ Please take immediate action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the Recommended Action.

☐ Letters and telegrams should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to the relevant provisions in international law, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";

Article 5, "No one shall be subjected to **torture** or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or **punishment**";

Article 9, "No one shall be subjected to arbitary arrest, detention or exile".

☐ The name of Amnesty International can be used unless stated otherwise; although, letters written in a private or professional capacity may be more effective.

☐ Information about the alleged connection of any person with an organization which is banned in their country is provided as background only and should not be included in appeals.

☐ In Urgent Action cases, where Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the possible ill-treatment of prisoners, appeals are issued when the circumstances of a person's arrest or disappearance make such treatment likely. Do not make direct accusations and, unless otherwise instructed, do not use the word "torture".

☐ Send at least one telegram or express letter immediately. Other letters can be sent afterwards to the addresses listed. Copies of letters should be sent to the relevant diplomatic representatives in your country. Copies of any replies received should be sent immediately to the International Secretariat, or to your national section or Urgent Action coordinator. Thank the official who has replied, requesting that you be kept informed about the case.