

URGENT ACTION amnesty international URGENT ACTION

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EXTERNAL (for
general distribution)

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UA 50/83 Fear of torture/extrajudicial execution 3 March 1983

EL SALVADOR: Jorge Benjamín RODRIGUEZ DUENAS
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Jorge Benjamín Rodríguez Dueñas, a member of the *Sindicato Nacional de la Industria del Transporte*, was abducted on 19 February 1983 in Soyapango by heavily armed men in plain clothes. It is not known whether his arrest has been officially acknowledged and there are fears for his safety.

Jorge Rodríguez Dueñas had been previously arrested on 11 August 1982, together with other members of the *Sindicato Nacional de la Industria del Transporte* (National Union of Transport Workers). Their detention was subsequently acknowledged by the *Policía de Hacienda* (Treasury Police); they were accused of storing and printing communist propaganda in the offices of the *Sindicato Nacional de la Industria del Transporte*. Four of the six trade unionists arrested were later released, including Jorge Benjamin Rodríguez Dueñas. Two are still held in detention. (See UA 190/82 AMR 29/71/82 16 August, AMR 29/93/82 9 November, AMR 29/01/83 11 February.)

Background information

During 1982 Amnesty International continued to receive regular, often daily, reports identifying El Salvador's regular security and military units as responsible for the torture, "disappearance" and individual and mass killings of non-combatant civilians from all sectors of society. Testimonies received by Amnesty International indicate that all branches of the Salvadorian security forces have been implicated in human rights violations on a large scale. Many victims of these abuses are characterized by their association, or alleged association, with peasant, labour or religious organizations, with the trade union movement, with professional organizations, with human rights organizations, with refugee and relief organizations or with political parties. Other victims have included non-combatant civilians living in areas targeted for security operations because the authorities suspected local inhabitants of sympathising with guerrilla forces.

Amnesty International has repeatedly appealed to the Salvadorian authorities to investigate and account for the thousands of detentions, "disappearances" and killings that have taken place since 1979. The government has, however, consistently failed to bring those responsible to justice. Amnesty International considers that the authorities have not once responded satisfactorily to international expressions of concern about human rights abuses.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/express letters/letters expressing serious concern about the reported abduction of Jorge Rodríguez Duenas and urging that he be humanely treated while in detention. Request clarification of his whereabouts and legal situation and urge that, unless formally charged and brought before a court, he be immediately released.

Please organize some appeals from TRADE UNIONISTS.

APPEALS TO:

S.E. Alvaro Magaña Borja
Presidente de la República
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

*Telegrams to: Presidente Magaña
Borja, San Salvador, El Salvador*

Dr Julio Alfredo Samayoa
Ministro de Trabajo
Ministerio de Trabajo
2 Avenida Norte
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Minister of Labour)

*Telegrams to: Ministro Trabajo Samayoa,
San Salvador, El Salvador*

General José Guillermo García
Ministro de Defensa y Seguridad Pública
Ministerio de Defensa y Seguridad Pública
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Copies of appeals may be sent to Salvadorian diplomatic representatives in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Check with the International Secretariat if sending appeals after 13 April 1983.

- Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended action. If possible, send a telegram or express letter immediately to one or more of the addresses given. Other letters can be sent afterwards.
- Telegrams and letters should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to 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 arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

- The name of Amnesty International may be used, although letters written in a private or personal capacity are often more effective.
- Copies of appeals should be sent to relevant diplomatic representatives in your country.
- In Urgent Action cases, Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the ill-treatment of prisoners. An appeal is issued when Amnesty International believes it has received reliable and accurate information in such cases. It is not always possible to verify all details independently and in some instances the situation outlined in the appeal may change. Urgent Action participants are always notified of any significant new information.
- Copies of any replies received from government authorities should be sent immediately to your national section Urgent Action coordinator or direct to the International Secretariat. If appropriate, thank the official who has replied and ask to be kept informed about the case.