



# CENTRAL AMERICA SPECIAL ACTION (CASA)

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EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 29/06/83  
Distr: CO/GR + rel SC

CASA 05/83

10 March 1983

E L S A L V A D O R

## "Disappearance" of Human Rights Activists

Amnesty International has received reports of the "disappearance" of two more people who have been involved in human rights work in El Salvador. Both are believed to have been detained by the security forces.

### 1. José Roberto RIVERA MARTELLI

Gynaecologist, aged 38. He was reportedly detained on 10 February 1983 by three armed men in civilian clothes as he was leaving the clinic where he worked in the main street of Soyapango, near the capital San Salvador. His present whereabouts are unknown and his detention has not been acknowledged by the security forces. His abduction occurred the day after another doctor, Ana Gloria Castañeda de Montoya, was abducted from her office in San Salvador by a group of armed men. She was released after a few days but was reportedly questioned about Rivera, whose assistant she was about to become. Both doctors are graduates of the School of Medicine at the National University, which was taken over by the army in June 1980, since when its functions have been severely restricted. Dr. Rivera had reportedly been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at that time but was unable to take up his position as a result of the take-over. Dr. Rivera has worked for several years with the Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CDHES), El Salvador Human Rights Commission.

### 2. Pedro PERDOMO

Law student, married with three children. He was reportedly detained by men in plain clothes, believed to be members of the security forces, on 9 December 1982 in the capital San Salvador. His present whereabouts is unknown and as far as Amnesty International is aware, his detention has not been acknowledged by the security forces. Pedro Perdomo is believed to have been working with the Oficina de Tutela Legal del Arzobispado, Legal Aid Office of the Archbishopric, in San Salvador.

## BACKGROUND

Those active in defence of the human rights of the people of El Salvador have frequently become the target of human rights violations. In the past three years, several have "disappeared" or been killed by armed men believed to be members of the security forces. Amongst the cases reported to Amnesty International are the following:

María Magdalena ENRIQUEZ  
(UA 227/80 - AMR 29/49/80  
+ follow-up AMR 29/51/80)

Press Secretary  
of CDHES

Abducted 3 October 1980;  
found dead 4 October 1980.

Ramón VALLADARES PEREZ

Representative of  
CDHES

Killed by unidentified  
gunmen on 26 October 1980.

Carlos Eduardo VIDES  
Francisco Antonio CORTEZ  
BARRAZA  
Norberto HUEZO MARTINEZ  
(UA 306/81 - AMR 29/85/81  
+ follow-ups AMR 29/07/82  
and AMR 29/18/82)

All three worked  
with CDHES; Vides  
was the secretary  
of the statistics  
department.

Abducted 4 December 1981;  
seen in detention on 29  
December 1981; present  
whereabouts unknown.

Tomás Antonio LEIVA  
(AMR 29/40/82 - CASA 24/82)

Journalist and  
former CDHES  
collaborator

Reportedly killed by a  
paramilitary group  
in April/May 1982

Patricia CUELLAR  
(UA 185/82 - AMR 29/68/82  
+ follow-ups AMR 29/76/82 and  
AMR 29/94/82)

Former secretary at  
Socorro Jurídico\*

Detained by uniformed  
soldiers on 28 July  
1982; present whereabouts  
unknown.

América Fernanda PERDOMO  
(UA 201/82 - AMR 29/78/82)

Public relations  
officer of CDHES

Detained 20 August 1982;  
believed to be held by the  
Treasury Police; detention  
unacknowledged.

María Elena MARTINEZ DE  
RECINOS  
(UA 201/82 - AMR 29/78/82)

Representative of  
the Comité de  
Madres, Mothers'  
Committee

Detained together with  
América Fernanda Perdomo  
(see above)

For further information concerning those believed to be responsible for carrying out human rights abuses, please refer to AMR 29/73/82. They include military and police units, as well as paramilitary units acting in conjunction with regular security units.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Write to the Salvadorian authorities expressing concern at reports that Dr. José Roberto RIVERA MARTELLI and Pedro PERDOMO have been detained, allegedly by members of the security forces. Urge that their physical integrity be guaranteed while in detention and that they be released unless charged and brought before a court. You may refer to previous cases of killings and 'disappearances' of people active in the field of human rights in El Salvador (for details, see the Urgent Actions and CASA actions quoted above).
2. In the case of Dr. Rivera, you should try and involve members of the medical profession and university professors in your actions.
3. In the case of Pedro Perdomo, you should try and involve students in your actions.

\* For further details of the different human rights groups in El Salvador, see CASA 56/82 (AMR 29/83/82).

4. Those groups with sufficient resources should try and obtain publicity in their local area focussing on the situation of those working in defence of human rights in El Salvador.

APPEALS TO:

S.E. don Alvaro Magaña Presidente de la República de El Salvador Casa Presidencial San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	President of the Republic	Excelentísimo
General José Guillermo García Ministro de Defensa y Seguridad Pública Ministerio de Defensa y Seguridad Pública Casa Presidencial San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	Minister of Defence and Public Security	Señor Ministro
Coronel Carlos López Nuila* Director de la Policía Nacional 6a Calle Oriente San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	Director of the National Police	Señor Coronel

COPIES TO:

Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CDHES) Av. las Américas y Calle San José Urb. Isidro Menéndez, Edif. ACUS San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	El Salvador Human Rights Commission (independent)	Señores
Oficina de Tutela Legal del Arzobispado Comisión Arquidiocesano de Justicia y Paz Apartado 2253 San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	Legal Aid Office of the Archbishopric	"
(Dr. Rivera only)		
Comité Nacional de Defensa de los Pacientes, Trabajadores e Instituciones de Salud Decanato Facultad de Medicina Universidad Nacional de El Salvador San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	Committee for the Defence of Patients, Health Workers and Health Institutions	"

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\* The Salvadorian Government has recently created its own commission to investigate human rights abuses. Coronel Carlos López Nuila is reported to be one of the members of the board of directors. In your letters, you should refer to him in that capacity, as well as in his capacity as Head of the National Police.