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AI CONCERNS IN EL SALVADOR

The human rights situation in El Salvador has deteriorated sharply in recent months. Amnesty International is seriously concerned and fears a further increase in summary execution, torture and abduction by government forces as civil conflict continues between guerrillas and the government. Of some 8,000 Salvadorians estimated to have been killed during the past year, many are known to have been the victims of extrajudicial execution by the armed forces. Peasants and young people appear to be particular targets. Sources in the country say that nearly 3,300 peasants were among those killed for political reasons in 1980.

Despite government claims that those killed by its forces are guerrillas and guerrilla sympathisers, ^{many} victims of torture and death at the hands of the security forces were not generally shown to have any direct involvement in armed guerrilla activity.

International attention was captured by the killing on 3 December 1980 of three nuns and a woman missionary, all United States nationals, reported to have been abducted by security forces the previous day. However, in the week after those killings, from 6 to 12 December, according to sources in El Salvador, 144 people were killed, 66 of them by uniformed members of the security forces.

On 17 December 1980, members of the National Guard raided the town of Cojutepeque in the department of San Salvador and killed eight leaders (names on attached list) of the Central Campesina Salvadoreña (Salvadorian Peasants Organization) who were meeting to discuss plans for participation in the government's agrarian reform program. There have been similar attacks in the past.

There is evidence that young people are singled out because of their youth. On 10 January 1981, troops took 22 teen-agers from Mejicanos; all were later found dead, with marks showing that they had been tortured. An army spokesman said they died of bullet wounds in a confrontation with troops; but a doctor who examined 17 of the bodies said they had all been shot after dying. Five of the young women were unidentifiable because their faces had been erased.

AI has received reports that Salvadorian paramilitary squads regularly cross the border into Honduras to attack Salvadorian refugee camps. Inside El Salvador, church sources report that refugees have been taken from camps and killed. On 31 December 1980 soldiers from San Carlos garrison searched the Domus Mariae refugee centre in Mejicanos and took away Marcial Cruz, aged 18. He was later seen at the garrison, and on 9 January was found dead.

Red Cross clinics have been attacked: on 12 January, troops broke into a clinic in Chalatenango. They killed wounded people being treated there and abducted five young women aged from 14 to 22. On the same day, three men, members of the Baptist Church, were seized by security forces in San Salvador as they delivered provisions to the Red Cross. The whereabouts of all the people abducted in these two incidents are unknown.

Killings and "disappearances" of foreign journalists, including journalist John Sullivan, United States citizen, who was abducted on 28 December, have been widely reported in the international media; but Salvadorian journalists have also been

tims of the armed forces. On 15 January 1981, nine staff members of the newspaper Independiente, including journalists Vida Cuadra and Francisco Ramirez Avila, were taken from the newspaper's offices by troops. The authorities deny that they are in detention. (On 25 January, the newspaper closed down and its director Jorge Pinto took refuge in the Mexican Embassy.)

Members of the Roman Catholic Church and others helping refugees and victims of civil fighting have been hampered in their work by the security forces. The Archbishopric of San Salvador reported in mid-December that it had been forced to close its legal aid office (Socorro Juridico) because it had been raided 17 times in the previous year by the National Police. Even government offices have been subject to army raids. On 9 January, the publications department of the Education Ministry was raided by troops while it was printing leaflets with instructions for refugees; eight staff members, including the director of the department, were seized. Their whereabouts are unknown. Members of the El Salvador Human Rights Commission who witnessed the seizures have denied army allegations that subversive literature was found on the premises.

On 25 January, a leading member of the El Salvador Human Rights Commission, Victor Medrano, aged 29, was abducted from his home by plainclothes members of the National Police. Although he has been seen in the barracks of the National Police in San Salvador, authorities deny that he is in detention and there is very serious concern for his safety. No other members of the same commission have been killed since the beginning of October last year. One was Maria Magdalena Enriquez, its press secretary who was found dead in a shallow grave about 20 miles from the capital. She was abducted on 3 October 1980 while shopping and appears to have been killed the day after her abduction. Witnesses confirmed that two of the heavily armed men who detained Sra. Enriquez were uniformed members of the National Police. Representatives of the Junta (that headed the government of El Salvador until December 1980) however denied that police carried out the detention and stated that the government "was not implicated" in the matter. The other member of the commission killed was Ramon Valladares Perez, who was shot dead on 26 October while driving a car in the capital. The El Salvador Human Rights Commission is an independent human rights monitoring group that provides both assistance to victims of human rights abuse and publicises their cases. The Commission's offices have been destroyed by bombings three times last year in the presence of the permanent police guard on the premises. The Commission had reportedly been accused by the president of El Salvador, Ing. Jose Napoleon Duarte, of being "anti-patriotic" a few days before the abduction of Victor Medrano. The offices of the Commission were again surrounded by troops on 18 January and the Commission has seen itself forced to close down.

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People have been killed because of their association, or presumed association with peasant, labour or religious organizations, or with political parties or other organizations which do not actively support the present government. Although these killings took place against a background of conflict between government forces and guerrilla organizations, evidence reaching AI shows that many civilians not involved in guerrilla activity are being tortured and killed by the security forces. Most of the deaths ^{have} occurred after people were seized at their homes or places of work.

During 1980 the government of El Salvador repeatedly claimed that independent "anti-communist" assassination squads beyond government control were responsible for these abductions and murders. However, evidence collated by AI from hundreds of individual cases proves the responsibility of the regular security forces for serious violations of human rights. By attributing detentions, torture and killings to groups beyond government control, the government of El Salvador seems to have sought a means of evading accountability for the extra-legal measures carried out by its own security forces.

AI fears that the current wave of extrajudicial killings and "disappearances" will continue to escalate as the Salvadorian security forces use the cover of civil warfare to carry out large-scale killings of young people, peasants and others not shown to be involved in guerrilla activities.

EL SALVADOR

40 Cases of "Disappearance" and Killing of Civilians

11 December 1980 - 25 January 1981

<u>Disappeared or killed</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Security force</u>
DIS	HERNANDEZ VASQUEZ, Efrain Antonio	11 Dec 80	San Salvador	National Police
DIS	CONTRERAS MENDEZ, Wilfredo	17 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army/police
DIS	RIVAS AGUILAR, Herbert (aged 17)	17 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army/police
DIS	PALACIOS, Jesus (aged 15)	17 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army/police
DIS	MARROQUIN, Oscar	17 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army/police
KILLED	GONZALEZ, Torcuato	17 Dec 80	Cojutepeque	National Guard
KILLED	MENDEZ, Ruperto	"	"	"
KILLED	AYALA, Antonio	"	"	"
KILLED	LOPEZ, Jesus	"	"	"
KILLED	GABRIEL, Pablo	"	"	"
KILLED	FRANCO, Antonio	"	"	"
KILLED	AYALA, Eustacio	"	"	"
KILLED	LOPEZ, Angela	"	"	"
DIS/KILLED	CALDERON, Rafael Amilcar	17 Dec 80 body found 22 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	
DIS	CORNEJO AZUZENA, Felipe	19 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	
DIS	ALAS, Mariana	20 Dec 80	Soyapango	National Guard
DIS	SULLIVAN, John (United States citizen)	28 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS/KILLED	CRUZ, Marcial (aged 18)	31 Dec 80 body found 9 Jan 81	Mejicanos	army
DIS	ROMERO GALDAMEZ, Jesus (head of department)	9 Jan 81	Education Ministry publishing department in Mejicanos	army
DIS	MOREIRA, Romeo	"	"	"
DIS	PORTILLO, Otto Jaime	"	"	"
DIS	GUTIERREZ, Encarnación	"	"	"
DIS	MARTINEZ, Ricardo Alfonso	"	"	"
DIS	HERNANDEZ, Carlos Mauricio	"	"	"
DIS	CAMPOS, Alfredo	"	"	"
DIS	VALDEZ, Ana Ester	"	"	"
DIS	Sra PAZ UMANA de Rodas (aged 71)	10 Jan 81	San Mateo barrio, San Salvador	army

<u>appeared</u> <u>called</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Security force</u>
	CASTRO, Jaime Ernesto	12 Jan 81	San Salvador	
	MENDOZA ALCANTARA, Alberto	12 Jan 81	San Salvador	
	DEL CID, Alberto	12 Jan 81	San Salvador	
	TOVAR, Rosidel	12 Jan 81	Chalatenango	army
	/RECINOS, Vicenta	"	"	"
	HORAZO	"	"	"
	ECHEVERRIA, Hilda	"	"	"
	TORRES BENITES, Isabel (aged 14)	"	"	"
	CARCAMO, Sara	"	"	"
	TORRES, Nora Amilia (aged 18)	"	"	"
	GUILLEN BENITES, Rosa	"	"	"
	CUADRA, Vida	15 Jan 81	San Salvador	army
	RAMIREZ AVILA, Francisco	15 Jan 81	San Salvador	army
	MEDRANO, Victor	25 Jan 81	San Salvador	National Police

STOP PRESS

EL SALVADOR

32 Disappearances

AI has just received a further list of 32 names of civilians who "disappeared" between 11-20 December:

<u>DIS/KILLED</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Security force</u>
DIS	GONZALEZ, German Alberto	11 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	VILLEDA, Mario Leonel	11 Dec 80	Santa Ana	
DIS	CORTEZ, Reynaldo Antonio	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	TORRES, Walter Alexander	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	MONTENEGRO, Ana Gertrudis	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	National Police
DIS	ALARCON GALAN, Francisco	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	RAMIREZ, Hernan Rafaelano	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	army
DIS	LOPEZ, Jorge Armando	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	JUÁREZ, Gerónima	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	SALAZAR SANCHEZ, Manuel	12 Dec 80	Colonia San Pablo	National Guard
DIS	PINEDA PEREZ, Carlos Ernesto	12 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	ROMERO, Pedro Antonio	12 Dec 80	San Marcos	
DIS	SERRANO, Marcial	12 Dec 80	La Paz	
DIS	ABREGO, Ernesto	12 Dec 80	La Paz	
DIS	RAMOS, Mauricio Rigoberto (aged 18)	13 Dec 80	Zacatecoluca	
DIS	NIETO, Jorge Salvador	15 Dec 80	Zacatecoluca	
DIS	CORNEJO, Roberto Antonio	15 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	CARRILLO, Julio Cesar	16 Dec 80	Zacatecoluca	
DIS	LINARES MIRON, Yessy	16 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	REYES, Carlos Orlando	16 Dec 80	San Marcos	army
DIS	MACHON RIVERA, René	17 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	MARDOQUEO, Jehu	18 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	HERRERA MARTINEZ, José Omar	17 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	DIAZ SERRANO, Luis Alberto	17 Dec 80	San Salvador	
DIS	SAENZ ORELLANA, Juan Alberto	17 Dec 80	San Marcos	army
DIS	OCHOA DE VASQUEZ, Mirna Rosa	17 Dec 80	Soyapango	
DIS	FLORES PINEDA, Marco Antonio	18 Dec 80	San Marcos	army
DIS	HERNANDEZ PEREZ, Edil Amilcar	19 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army
DIS	CORNEJO AZUCENA, Felipe	19 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army
DIS	CACIERS HERNANDEZ, Juan José	19 Dec 80	San Antonio Abad	army
DIS	MARTINEZ, Francisco Manuel	19 Dec 80	Ciudad Delgado	National Guard
DIS	RAMIREZ, Oscar Armando	20 Dec 80	San Salvador	army