

**URGENT  
ACTION**

**amnesty  
international**

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

EXTERNAL (for  
general distribution)

*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))*

AI Index: AMR 29/08/81  
Distr: UA

UA 25/81

Fear of extra-judicial killing

4 February 1981

EL SALVADOR:

José Luis PEREZ, aged 32; his wife, María Paula PEREZ DE JACINTO, aged 34; their two children, Carolina Concepción, aged 7, and Sandra Guadalupe, aged 5. Angélica PEREZ, aged 13, sister of María Paula; José REYES MEJÍA, nephew of María Paula, and his wife, Adelina.

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On 23 January 1981 at 9.40 pm uniformed members of the security forces and of the army violently burst into the house of Lic. Marianella García Villas, president of the *Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador* (CDHES - El Salvador Human Rights Commission). She was not at home at the time of the attack, but her home was ransacked. The seven people named above were staying in the house at the time of the attack and were questioned about the whereabouts of Lic. Marianella García Villas. When the attackers did not receive the information they wanted they started to beat and torture the adults in front of the children who cried and begged them to stop. The children were then also beaten. They were all taken to the central barracks of the National Police in San Salvador.

The El Salvador Human Rights Commission has been the victim of several bomb attacks over the past months and has been accused by the President of El Salvador, Ing. José Napoleón Duarte, of being "anti-patriotic". The CDHES is an independent human rights monitoring group which provides assistance to victims of human rights abuses and publicises their cases. On 25 January 1981 the new information and administration secretary of the CDHES, Victor Medrano, was abducted from his home by members of the National Police and is also being held in the central barracks of the National Police, where he is reportedly being tortured. (AI has already issued an Urgent Action appeal on his behalf: UA 16/81 AI Index: AMR 29/05/81 28 January.)

The human rights situation in El Salvador has deteriorated sharply in recent months. AI is seriously concerned and fears a further increase in summary executions, torture and abduction by government forces as civil conflict continues between guerrilla 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 extra-judicial execution by the security forces. Peasants and young people appear to have been particular targets. Sources in El Salvador state that nearly 3,300 peasants were among those killed for political reasons in 1980. Between 14 and 30 January 1981 at least another 144 people were killed.

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

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RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/express letters urging the immediate release of these seven people, especially the children.

Please also request the authorities to do everything possible to halt the persecution of members of the El Salvador Human Rights Commission.

APPEALS TO:

Ing. José Napoleón Duarte  
Presidente  
Casa Presidencial  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Sr Carlos López Nuila  
Director de la Policía Nacional  
6 Calle Oriente  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Colonel Rafael Flores Lima  
Jefe de Estado Mayor del Ejército  
Calle Concepción  
Final Pasaje Merazo  
San Salvador, El Salvador

*(Army chief of staff)*

COPIES TO:

Nunciatura Apostolica  
Apartado Postal 559  
Colonia Excalón  
San Salvador, El Salvador

*(Roman Catholic church authority)*

and to Salvadorian diplomatic representatives in your country.

FINAL DATE FOR ACTION: 4 March 1981

*If there is a human rights commission or office in your country, please bring this case to their attention and ask them to send appeals. Appeals from organizations and charities concerned with children could also be requested.*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Please take immediate action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the Recommended Action.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 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:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Article 3, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";</li><li>Article 5, "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment";</li><li>Article 9, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile".</li></ul></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The name of Amnesty International can be used unless stated otherwise; although, letters written in a private or professional capacity may be more effective.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> 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.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 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".</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 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.</li></ul> |
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