



CENTRAL AMERICA SPECIAL ACTION (CASA)

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E L S A L V A D O R

6 February 1984

Further information on CASA 16/83 (AMR 29/24/83)

(see also follow-up AMR 29/29/83 and UA 133/83 - AMR 29/17/83)

ALFREDO ACOSTA DIAZ

AND OTHERS

Alfredo ACOSTA DIAZ was reportedly arrested on 9 June 1983 in San Salvador, together with his wife, three children and three other people, and taken to the National Police Headquarters, where they were held for several days under investigation.

One CASA participant has received the following information from the governmental Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CDH), El Salvador Human Rights Commission, via the Dirección General de Protección de Menores, General Directorate for the Protection of Juveniles, at the Ministry of Justice, dated 6 December 1983:

"Alfredo ACOSTA DIAZ, aged 54, small trader, was captured by members of the National Police on 9 June 1983 in Pasaje Neptuno, Block "F", House No. 12, Colonia Urbanización Satélite, because the authorities had knowledge that he has been a member of the Communist Party since 1962 and that he was carrying out subversive activities. His case has been assigned to a Juez Militar de Instrucción, Military Investigating Judge, file No. 3920 of 24 June 1983.

Ramón Ernesto ACOSTA CASTRO, aged 32, student of agricultural engineering at the University of El Salvador. The National Police states that it has been established that he belongs to the Salvadorian Communist Party (PCS) and that in 1973 he travelled to Russia to study zootechnics* (zootecnia) and that at present he is in charge of carrying out tests for those wishing to obtain grants from the Salvadorian Communist Party to study in Russia. He was assigned to a Military Investigating Judge under file No. 3920 of 24 June 1983 and is being held in "La Esperanza" Prison, Mariona.

* zootechnics = the science of breeding and domestication of animals

Rosa Ada SOTO DE ACOSTA, aged 45, housewife, captured by members of the National Police on 8 June 1983, in Pasaje Neptuno, Block "F", No. 12, Colonia Ciudad Satélite, in this city, because the authorities have knowledge that she belongs to the Salvadorian Communist Party (PCS) and its armed wing the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación (FAL), Armed Forces of Liberation. Rosa Ada Soto de Acosta is the wife of Alfredo Acosta Díaz, with whom she has travelled to communist countries on behalf of the PCS, and she is in charge of a "safe" house belonging to the organization. She was assigned to a Military Investigating Judge under File No. 3920 of 24 June 1983. She is being held in the Ilopango Women's Readaptation Centre.

Irma Angélica SOTO, aged 29, housewife; she was captured by members of the National Police on 8 June 1983 in Pasaje Neptuno, Block "F", No. 12, Colonia Ciudad Satélite, in this city, because the authorities have knowledge that she is directly linked with the Salvadorian Communist Party (PCS) and with its armed wing, the Armed Forces of Liberation (FAL). Irma Angélica Soto is the stepdaughter of Alfredo Acosta Díaz and according to the information provided by the National Police, she studied as a laboratory technician in Cuba, with a grant from the Salvadorian Communist Party, and she was in charge of making sure that the "safe" house where she lived was not discovered. She was assigned to a Military Investigating Judge under File No. 3920 of 24 June 1983. She is being held in the Ilopango Women's Readaptation Centre.

Ana del Carmen SOTO, aged 17, highschool student; she was captured by members of the National Police on 8 June 1983 in Pasaje Neptuno, Block "F", No. 12, Colonia Ciudad Satélite, in this city, and held for investigation. She was released on the 24th of that month, in the presence of Mr. Robert Ballester, a delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Ana Rubia AQUINO AGUILAR, aged 20, maid of the house; she was captured by members of the National Police on 8 June 1983 in Pasaje Neptuno, Block "F", No. 12, Colonia Ciudad Satélite, in this city, and was held for investigation. She was released on 24 June 1983 in the presence of Mr. Robert Ballester, a delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Gilda LEAL DE NEGRO, aged 62, housewife; she was captured by members of the National Police on 9 June 1983 in Urbanización Ciudad Satélite, Block "F", No. 12, Pasaje Neptuno, in this city, because the authorities have knowledge that she is a member of the Salvadorian Communist Party (PCS). She was assigned to a Military Investigating Judge under File No. 3920 of 24 June 1983. She is at present being held in Ilopango Women's Readaptation Centre.

Oscar Humberto NEGRO LEAL, aged 18, medical student at the University of El Salvador, resident of Santa Ana, and nephew of Alfredo Acosta Díaz, was captured on 8 June 1983 by members of the National Police in Pasaje Neptuno of this city, because the authorities know that he is a member of the Salvadorian Communist Party and that he is

in charge of making sure that the "safe" house where he lived was not discovered. He was assigned to a Military Investigating Judge under File No. 3920 of 24 June 1983. He is being held at "La Esperanza" Penal and Readaptation Centre."

Alfredo Acosta Díaz was a deputy in the Salvadorian National Assembly in 1974 and is the Secretary General of the Unión Democrática Nacionalista (UDN), Nationalist Democratic Union, a left-of-centre political party set up in 1969 which participated in the first coalition government formed after the overthrow of General Romero in 1979.

Background

Under Decree 507 of 3 December 1980 the Salvadorian security forces are permitted to detain any individual suspected of having participated in terrorist activities. Such detainees may be held for up to 15 days in incommunicado detention during which time a military judge has to determine whether there is sufficient grounds for continued detention. If so, the detainee is then transferred to an official prison. In practice, the 15 day period of incommunicado detention is often exceeded and it is during this period that detainees are routinely tortured. When a detainee is transferred to prison, their case is assigned to a Juez Militar de Instrucción, Military Investigating Judge, who has to decide, within 180 days after the detainee's arrest, whether the detainee should be freed or transferred to the jurisdiction of the civilian courts for further prosecution. None of the political prisoners at present being held in El Salvador have been brought to trial and many have been held for longer than 180 days, some as long as three years. All decisions throughout the proceedings are made by military judges without the participation of the defendant or his/her lawyer.

Further Recommended Actions

Please send appeals on behalf of Alfredo Acosta Díaz, Ramón Ernesto Acosta Castro, Rosa Ada Soto de Acosta, Irma Angélica Soto, Gilda Leal de Negro and Oscar Humberto Negro Leal:

- requesting details of any formal charges* against them and of the evidence that the National Police possesses to support the accusations;
- asking when they are to be brought to trial and urging that they be promptly brought to trial in an ordinary court with full judicial guarantees, or otherwise released;
- requesting that they be allowed full and immediate access to lawyers of their choice;
- urging that they be humanely treated while in detention.

* It is unlikely that any of the detainees have been formally charged with the offences they are accused of in the letter from the CDH, since, to Amnesty International's knowledge, very few political prisoners in El Salvador are formally charged with any offence.

Appeals to:

Dr. Ramiro Arturo Ramírez Asahar (Minister of Justice)
Ministro de Justicia
Ministerio de Justicia
3a Avenida Norte y 11a Calle Poniente
San Salvador, El Salvador

For the men only:

Sr. José Roberto Portillo (Director of La Esperanza
Director Men's Prison)
Centro Penitenciario "La Esperanza"
Calle A, Cantón Mariona
Mejicanos
San Salvador, El Salvador

For the women only:

Lic. Ana Felicita Díaz (Director of Ilopango
Directora Women's Prison)
Centro de Readaptación de Mujeres
Ilopango
San Salvador, El Salvador

Copies to:

Sr. Angel Benjamin Gestoni (Governmental Human
Secretario Ejecutivo Rights Commission)
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de
El Salvador (CDH)
2o Piso, Edif. Fiscalía General
de la República
13 C Poniente, Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador

Socorro Jurídico Cristiano (Independent Legal Aid
"Arzobispado Oscar Romero" Office)
Aguascalientes 16
06760 México DF
Mexico

Please limit appeals to FIVE PER SECTION.

NOTE Please consult the International Secretariat if sending appeals
after 30 April 1984.