

URGENT ACTION amnesty international URGENT ACTION

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Fear of Torture/Health Concern

5 May 1983

EL SALVADOR: Dr Angel IBARRA
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Amnesty International is concerned about Dr Angel Ibarra, a medical doctor, who was reportedly arrested on 27 April 1983 by armed men believed to belong to the security forces or to be members of a paramilitary group acting with the security forces' implicit or explicit warrant.

Dr Ibarra is reported to have been arrested together with Reverend Medgardo Gómez, the President of the Lutheran Synod in El Salvador and pastor of La Resurrección Church, San Salvador, after they had driven two visiting Norwegian churchmen to the international airport in San Salvador. On 29 April they were both handed over to the National Police and on 30 April Reverend Gómez was released. However, Dr Ibarra is reported to be still held at the National Police headquarters in San Salvador and highly reliable sources who have seen Dr Ibarra in detention indicate that he is in serious need of medical treatment. Both Reverend Gómez and Dr Ibarra are reported to have been ill-treated while in detention.

Dr Ibarra has been working with refugees in association with the Lutheran Synod and in charge of the coordination of medical care for projects run by La Resurrección Lutheran Church in San Salvador. At the time of his arrest, Dr Ibarra was reportedly working on a project called "Fe de Esperanza" (Faith in Hope) with 200 displaced women and children just outside San Salvador.

So far no charges have been brought against Dr Ibarra.

Background

Amnesty International has been following the human rights situation in El Salvador closely for a number of years, and has concluded that the security forces have been regularly involved in a systematic and widespread program of torture, "disappearance", and individual and mass killings of men, women and children. The victims have included not only people suspected of opposition to the authorities, but thousands who were simply resident in areas targeted for security operations, whose murder or mutilation seems to have been completely arbitrary. Victims of arbitrary detention, "disappearance" and murder have included priests, trade unionists, church workers, politicians, teachers, academics, peasant families, community workers, medical personnel, patients abducted from their sickbeds or murdered in hospital by security agents, human rights activists and people working with refugee or relief organizations.

Medical personnel in El Salvador have been among the specific targets of repression by the official security forces, apparently for having treated the wounded, including non-combatant civilians. First aid workers have also been abducted as they tried to transport medical supplies to victims of the current hostilities in El Salvador.

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Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the release of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed *prisoners of conscience*. It works for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the *death penalty* and *torture* or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of *all prisoners* without reservation.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/express letters/letters expressing serious concern about the reported detention of Dr Angel Ibarra and urging that he be humanely treated. Request clarification of his legal status and urge that he be immediately released unless formally charged and brought before a court. Express concern at reports that he is in a serious physical condition and urge that he be given adequate medical treatment.

APPEALS TO:

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

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

General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova
Ministro de Defensa y Seguridad Pública
Ministerio de Defensa y Seguridad Pública
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador
(Minister of Defence)

Telegrams to: Ministro Defensa Vides Casanova, San Salvador, El Salvador

Coronel Carlos López Nuila
Director de la Policía Nacional
6a Calle Oriente
San Salvador, El Salvador
(Director of National Police)

Telegrams to: Sr. López Nuila, Director Policía Nacional, San Salvador, El Salvador

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

CDHES (gubernamental)
Dr Benjamin Custoni
2a Planta
Fiscalía General de la República
Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador

Diario El Mundo
2a Av. Norte 211
San Salvador, El Salvador

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador in your country.

PLEASE TRY TO ORGANIZE SOME APPEALS FROM MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Check with the International Secretariat if sending appeals after 16 June 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.