

**URGENT
ACTION**

**amnesty
international**

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Further information on UA 97/83 (AMR 29/11/83 5 May) - Fear of Torture/
Health Concern

EL SALVADOR: Dr Angel IBARRA GUEVARA (*note corrected name*)
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Dr Angel Ibarra Guevara, aged 26, was arrested on 27 April 1983 in Comalapa, east of San Salvador, by a group of armed men. He was detained together with Rev. Medardo Gómez, a Lutheran pastor. The authorities acknowledged several days later that the two men were in the custody of the National Police and Rev. Gómez was subsequently released.

A representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross was permitted to visit Dr Ibarra at the National Police headquarters, where he is said to be in an extremely serious condition. One report states that he was taken immediately after his arrest to a private home, not far from San Salvador airport, where he was allegedly given electric shocks in the feet and eardrums. His shoulder is reported to have been dislocated and he is said to be suffering from internal injuries. Dr Ibarra is also reported to be suffering from bone cancer.

Amnesty International has received reports that, according to a spokesperson at the US Embassy in San Salvador, Dr Ibarra is suspected by the Salvadorian police of being the medical director of an armed opposition group. However, Amnesty International so far has no information that he has been officially charged. Under decree law 507 suspects can be held for up to six months after they have been brought before a military examining judge, during which time an investigation is carried out into the alleged charges. Even if it is found that there is not sufficient evidence to proceed with a prosecution, the military court may still order the person to be held for a further 120 days. Over 600 people are being held in El Salvador under decree law 507, but so far no one has been brought to trial.

Both Dr Ibarra and Rev. Gomez work on a Lutheran church project called "*Fe y Esperanza*" (Faith and Hope), which is reportedly aiding 1,000 displaced people, mainly women and children who are victims of the civil conflict in the country.

Amnesty International has received information about another aid worker who was recently arrested and subsequently released. Wilfredo Amaya, aged 23, a student and regional director of the Catholic relief agency CARITAS in the Archdiocese of San Salvador, was reportedly arrested on 4 May 1983 by men in olive green combat uniform. His detention was subsequently acknowledged by the National Police and he was reportedly accused of subversion. He was subsequently released on 9 May. According to one report, he was tortured while in detention.

Earlier in April 1983, two Christian community workers from San Ramón were abducted by men who reportedly identified themselves as members of the National Police. Two days later the bodies of the two, Paula and Mauricio Ernesto Acevedo Mejía, were found. Both had been shot in the back of the head and showed signs of having been tortured.

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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.

Further recommended action:

Please continue to appeal on behalf of Dr Angel Ibarra Guevara, expressing concern at his detention 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 Dr Ibarra is in a serious physical condition and that he is also suffering from bone cancer. Urge that he be given all necessary medical attention.

Appeals to:

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

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

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)

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 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.