

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on 314/91 (AMR 20/10/91, 20 September 1991, and follow-up AMR 29/10/91, 26 September 1991) - Death Threats/Harassment

EL SALVADOR:Mirtala LOPEZ and other human rights workers

Amnesty International has learned that Mirtala López has now left El Salvador.

In September, she was subjected to death threats and other forms of harassment, by a group calling itself the Frente Anticomunista de El Salvador (FAS), the Salvadorian Anti-Communist Front, which Amnesty International believes may be linked to certain sectors of the Armed Forces. Mirtala López is the Secretary for Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Comité Cristiano pro Desplazados de El Salvador (CRIPDES), the Christian Committee for the Displaced of El Salvador.

Before leaving El Salvador, Mirtala López presented a judicial complaint to the Attorney General's Office (Fiscalía General), requesting that the threats against her be investigated. However, to date the Attorney General's Office does not appear to have taken any significant steps to determine the origin of these threats.

Amnesty International remains concerned for the safety of other human rights workers and members of other non-governmental organizations who are also reported to have received death threats from the FAS.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent months Amnesty International has documented a resurgent pattern of threats and intimidatory acts carried out openly by government security forces or by clandestine groups, such as the FAS, which Amnesty International believes are acting with their acquiescence. These threats are directed at groups and individuals perceived by the authorities as sympathising or having links with the FMLN armed opposition group. CRIPDES is amongst many Salvadorian humanitarian organizations whose criticism of human rights violations by the government has led to their being identified with the FMLN in the eyes of the authorities.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:Telegrams/Telexes/Faxes and Airmail Letters:

- asking what steps the Attorney General's Office (Fiscalía General) and other government bodies have taken to investigate the threats by the FAS and other forms of harassment directed against Mirtala López and other human rights workers;

- urge that measures be taken to ensure that human rights workers and members of other non-governmental organizations in El Salvador are able to carry out their work without threat to their physical safety.

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gubernamental
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and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 November 1991.