



**amnesty  
international**

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT  
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United Kingdom

**URGENT  
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 385/93 (AMR 29/18/93, 1 November 1993) - Apparent political killings / fear for safety

EL SALVADOR: Eleno\* Hernán CASTRO, opposition politician

\* NOTE CORRECT SPELLING

Recent statements made by President Alfredo Cristiani and other government officials have indicated that the case of Eleno Hernán Castro, a leader of the opposition *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN), Farabundo Martí Liberation Front, killed on 30 October 1993, has been resolved. President Cristiani claimed that investigations had concluded and had revealed that it was not a politically motivated killing.

However ONUSAL, the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador has confirmed to Amnesty International that the judicial investigation is still open and that no conclusion can yet be drawn about the motive for the killing; the only valid witnesses to the crime were minors and no suspect has so far been detained.

In several recent cases of killings of opposition activists, the government has suggested the crimes were not politically motivated and did not involve government forces. However, few cases have been exhaustively investigated and the pattern and circumstances of the killings indicate the possibility of government forces operating clandestinely. Some of the killings bear the characteristics of government "death squads" which have been so notorious in the past.

There has been national and international pressure on the government to create a commission of inquiry into the so-called "death squads", as recommended by the Truth Commission, appointed last year by the United Nations to investigate past human rights abuses in El Salvador. Official documents recently released in the United States implicating senior Salvadorean government officials in past "death squad" activity make the need for an inquiry all the more urgent. The government has announced that such a commission will be created, with the assistance of ONUSAL and the governmental *Procurador Nacional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos* (National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights). However, its creation has reportedly been delayed due to disagreement as to its composition.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Spanish, English or your own language:

- expressing concern that government statements imply that the Eleno Hernán Castro case is resolved and that it has been established that the motive was not political;
- saying that ONUSAL has confirmed that the case is still open, that a motive for the killing cannot be determined and that no suspect has been arrested;
- calling for rigorous investigation into this case so that the truth is clarified and those responsible are brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to proceed immediately with the commission of inquiry into the "death squads", which should clarify all "death squad"-style killings since the end of the war, bring to justice those

☎ (44)(71) 413 5500 Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1 Telex: 28502 FAX: 956 1157

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.



responsible and dismantle "death squad" structures; the commission should also undertake exhaustive examination of all evidence which has come to light both during and since the end of the war regarding the operation of "death squads" and their links to state structures;  
- stating that the eradication of "death squads" is necessary to ensure the security of the Peace Accords and forthcoming elections and to guarantee human rights in the future.

**APPEALS TO:**

President

Lic. Alfredo Cristiani  
Presidente de la República de El Salvador  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Telegrams: President Cristiani, San Salvador, El Salvador**  
**Faxes: + 503 81 0018**  
**Telexes: 20245 RS SAL or 20522 PRES SAL**  
**Salutation: Su Excelencia/Your Excellency**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dr. José Manuel Pacas Castro  
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
Boulevard Manuel Enrique Araujo Km. 6  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Telegrams: Ministro Relaciones Exteriores, San Salvador, El Salvador**  
**Faxes: + 503 98 0334/98 0314**  
**Telexes: 20179 RREE SAL**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights

Dr. Carlos Molina Fonseca  
Procurador para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos  
Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos  
9ª Avda. Norte y 5ª Calle Pte.  
Edificio AMSA, N° 535  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Faxes: + 503 71 2886**

Farabundo Martí Liberation Front

Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN)  
Secretaría de Derechos Humanos  
calle Gabriela Mistral #209  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Diario Latino

6ª Avda. Norte 325  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Faxes: + 503 71 0971**

and to diplomatic representatives of EL SALVADOR accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 January 1994.

- Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended actions. If possible, send a telegram, telex, fax 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 may be more effective.
- Copies of appeals should be sent to relevant diplomatic representatives in your country.
- In Urgent Actions cases, Amnesty International has to act rapidly on behalf of victims of grave human rights violations. 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 facts.
- Copies of any replies received from government authorities should be sent immediately to your section's Urgent Action coordinator or direct to the Campaign and Membership Department of the International Secretariat. If appropriate, thank the official who has replied and ask to be kept informed about the case.