

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

**AI Index: AMR 29/42/80
Distr: UA**

UA 193/80

Fear of torture/Fear of extra-judicial killing

27 August 1980

EL SALVADOR: Members of the Electricity Workers Union

AI has received reports that on 22 August 1980 almost the entire leadership of the *Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Electricidad de la Central Eléctrica del Rio Lempa* (STECCEL – Union of Electricity Workers at the Rio Lempa power station) were arrested and detained by military forces. The arrests have been acknowledged by the military authorities who have also stated that these trade unionists will be tried before a military tribunal on unspecified charges.

Following a 24-hour strike by electricity workers throughout El Salvador on 21 August 1980, all public services were placed under military administration with effect from 23 August, and all civilian public employees were declared to be military employees under military legal jurisdiction.

The following are known to be among those arrested:

Emeterio AREVALO	- local leader of STECEL
René AZAHAR	- disputes sub-secretary of STECEL
José FIGUEROA	- local leader of STECEL
José Arnulfo GRANDE	- secretary general of STECEL
Miguel GUEVARA	- local leader of STECEL
José Alberto HERNAN	- local leader of STECEL
Alfonso HERNANDEZ REPRESA	- disputes secretary of STECEL
Jorge HERNANDEZ	- finance secretary of STECEL
Mauricio HERRERA	- publicity secretary of STECEL
Alfredo MARTINEZ	- welfare secretary of STECEL
Arcadio RAUDA	- local leader of STECEL
Hector Bernabe RECINOS	- secretary general of FENASTRAS*
Alcides RIVAS	- disputes sub-secretary of STECEL
Jorge RIVERA	- local leader of STECEL
Arturo VALENCIA	- organization secretary of STECEL

(*Federación Nacional de Sindicatos de Trabajadores Salvadoreños – National Federation of Salvadorian Workers Unions)

The names of other trade unionists arrested at the same time are not yet known.

There is considerable fear for the safety of these trade unionists. At least 2,000 Salvadorians have been killed or have “disappeared” while in the hands of conventional and auxiliary security forces since early January 1980, when most of the government resigned partly because of human rights violations. Church sources in El Salvador have documented 2,065 cases of people summarily killed for association or presumed association with political opposition groups, peasant leagues or industrial trade unions. Many of the victims have been tortured and savagely mutilated.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters expressing concern at reports of the arrest of members of the Electricity Workers Union; urging that they be granted immediate access to lawyers of their choice and that they be either charged and brought before a civil court, if there is evidence against them, or released. Please also ask for assurances that they are being humanely treated while in detention, and ask that an independent doctor be allowed access to them.

TRADE UNIONISTS in particular are asked to take part in this Urgent Action.

APPEALS TO:

<p>Ing. José Napoleón Duarte Junta Revolucionaria de Gobierno Palacio Nacional San Salvador, El Salvador</p>	<p>Julio Alfredo Samayoa Ministro de Trabajo Ministerio de Trabajo 2 Avenida Norte San Salvador, El Salvador</p>
<p>COPIES TO:</p> <p>Consejo Permanente de las Fuerzas Armadas (COPEFA) Segunda Brigada d'Artería Cuartel San Carlos San Salvador, El Salvador</p> <p>Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador, Avenida España 928 San Salvador, El Salvador</p>	

FINAL DATE FOR ACTION: 8 October 1980