



**amnesty
international**

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
1 Easton Street London WC1X 8DJ
United Kingdom

**URGENT
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 29/43/83
Distr: UA/SC

UA 248/83

"Disappearance"

16 November 1983

EL SALVADOR: Luis CONTRERAS PERTICA
=====

According to eyewitness reports Luis Contreras Pertica, aged 38, an employee in a government planning department, was arrested during the evening of 11 November 1983 by members of the National Police in three vehicles. They reportedly also searched the house in Ayutuxtepeque, San Salvador, and took away some papers.

The present whereabouts of Luis Contreras are unknown. He was not involved in political activities, to Amnesty International's knowledge.

Following the elections for a constituent assembly held on 28 March 1982, reports of human rights violations involving the official security forces have continued unabated. The violations are occurring in a context of continued conflict between the government and opposition forces, but ^{reports} received by Amnesty International indicate that non-combatants from all sectors of Salvadorian society continue to be the victims of such violations, including arbitrary detention, "disappearance", and extrajudicial executions at the hands of the official military and police services, who act on occasion in conjunction with clandestine paramilitary squads who have their explicit or implicit warrant. As in previous years, in no single instance since the elections have the Salvadorian authorities issued a satisfactory response to enquires concerning these violations.

According to Salvadorian law (Decree 507 of December 1980), all detainees are to be brought before a *juez militar de instruccion* (examining judge) within 15 days of their arrest. It is during this period of unacknowledged detention in the headquarters of the security and military units that detainees are in many cases reportedly tortured and killed. Frequently the detention is never acknowledged. The judge may then remand the detainee in custody for up to 180 days pending secret investigation. Even if insufficient evidence is found to justify the continued detention of the prisoner, the judge may order the person to be held for a further period of up to 120 days for reasons of security.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/express letters/airmail letters requesting clarification of the legal situation of Luis Contreras Pertica and urging that he be immediately released unless charged and brought before a court. Seek assurances that his physical integrity will be guaranteed while in detention.

.../...

☎ 01-833 1771 Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1 Telex: 28502

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*

APPEALS TO:

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

Telegrams to: Director Policía
Nacional López Nuila, 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

Sr. Roberto D'Aubuisson
Presidente de la Asamblea Constituyente
San Salvador, El Salvador

(President of the Constituent Assembly)

Telegrams to: Presidente Asamblea
Constituyente D'Aubuisson, San Salvador,
El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador
Dr Benjamin Cestoni
2a Planta
Edif. Fiscalía General de la República
Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador
(governmental human rights commission)

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Check with the
International Secretariat if sending appeals after 31 December 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 may be 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 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.