

**URGENT
ACTION**

**amnesty
international**

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International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England

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*Amnesty International opposes by all appropriate means the imposition and infliction of death penalties and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of prisoners or other detained or restricted persons whether or not they have used or advocated violence.
(Amnesty International Statute, Article 1(c))*

UA 170/81

"Disappearance"

13 July 1981

EL SALVADOR: Edgar Mauricio VALLEJO
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Edgar Mauricio Vallejo, a writer who is well-known throughout Central America, was seized by masked men in plain clothes in the Plaza del Sol in San Salvador on 4 July 1981. He was driven away in a jeep without number plates. At first, the detention of a man whose description fitted that of Sr. Vallejo was acknowledged by the National Police but they later denied that this was Sr. Vallejo.

Sr. Vallejo is aged 23 and is married with a child aged one and a half. His poems and stories have been published in the magazine EDUCA (*Editorial Universitario Centro America*) in Costa Rica. He worked at the faculty of humanities of the National University of San Salvador until it was closed in June 1980. He has also studied psychology. According to Amnesty International's information, he has not been involved in political activities.

There are grave fears that Sr. Vallejo may be tortured and killed while in the hands of his abductors.

All the information available to Amnesty International suggests that the majority of reported human rights violations in El Salvador, including torture, "disappearance" and deliberate cold-blooded killings, have been carried out by the security forces, and have been directed against people not involved in guerrilla activities.

Background information

Human rights violations on a massive scale continue to be brought to Amnesty International's attention. Amnesty International is aware that these human rights violations have occurred at a time of escalating civil conflict between guerrilla groups and the Salvadorian authorities and is also aware of reports of human rights violations having been committed by non-governmental forces. However, there is a systematic pattern of human rights violations being carried out by the security forces against people not involved in guerrilla activities. Testimonies received by Amnesty International implicate all branches of the Salvadorian security forces, whether nominally military, military police or paramilitary, in violations which have occurred on such a scale that they constitute a gross and consistent pattern of human rights abuses. Amnesty International has documented case after case of abduction, murder and torture by troops and police of non-violent opponents, human rights workers, priests, teachers, students, journalists, medical workers and others.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/express letters expressing concern at reports of the detention of Sr. Vallejo, urging that his physical integrity be respected and that he be immediately released unless charged and brought before a court of law.

Please organize appeals from writers and journalists in your country.

APPEALS TO:

Ing. José Napoleón Duarte
Presidente
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Ing. Carlos Aquilino Duarte
Ministro de Educación
Ministerio de Educación
San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

- Instituto Salvadoreño de Cultura Hispanica,
27 Av. S y 12 C P, San Salvador, El Salvador
- EDUCA (Editorial Universitario Centro America, San Pedro,
San José, Costa Rica
- Asociación de Periodistas de El Salvador, Paseo General
Escalón Edif Casa del Periodista, San Salvador, El Salvador
- Salvadorian diplomatic representatives in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Appeals may continue until 13 August 1981.

Please take immediate action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the Recommended Action.

Letters and telegrams should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to the 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 can be used unless stated otherwise; although, letters written in a private or professional capacity may be more effective.

Information about the alleged connection of any person with an organization which is banned in their country is provided as background only and should not be included in appeals.

In Urgent Action cases, where Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the possible ill-treatment of prisoners, appeals are issued when the circumstances of a person's arrest or disappearance make such treatment likely. Do not make direct accusations and, unless otherwise instructed, do not use the word "torture".

Send at least one telegram or express letter immediately. Other letters can be sent afterwards to the addresses listed. Copies of letters should be sent to the relevant diplomatic representatives in your country. Copies of any replies received should be sent immediately to the International Secretariat, or to your national section or Urgent Action coordinator. Thank the official who has replied, requesting that you be kept informed about the case.