

**URGENT
ACTION**

**amnesty
international**

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

EXTERNAL (for
general distribution)

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))

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"Disappearance"

14 August 1981

EL SALVADOR: Recent abductions

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The people named below were reported to have been arrested in the capital, San Salvador, by members of the Salvadorian security forces. Although their detention has not been acknowledged by the government and their present whereabouts are unknown, they are believed to be still alive. There are however grave fears for their safety while they are held in incommunicado detention.

1. Carlos Antonio AREVALO CHAVEZ, aged 19, arrested 11 August 1981
2. Jose Antonio ESTRADA, aged 28, arrested 11 August 1981
3. Beatriz GONZALEZ, aged 25, arrested 11 August 1981
4. Eduardo CELAYA ARAUJO, arrested 11 August 1981
5. Juan Francisco LOPEZ ORELLANA, aged 21, arrested 11 August 1981
6. Mauricio Andres LOPEZ GONZALEZ, aged 17, arrested 11 August 1981
7. Francisco MARTINEZ BERNABE, aged 23, arrested 10 August 1981
8. Julio Eduardo ROMERO CARRANZA, aged 20, arrested 9 August 1981
9. Oscar MENDOZA, aged 45, arrested 9 August 1981
10. Mario Humberto ORELLANA PORTILLO, aged 20, arrested 7 August 1981
11. Antonio DELGARDO VASQUEZ, aged 22, arrested 2 August 1981
12. Francisco HERNANDEZ MEJIA, aged 23, arrested 2 August 1981
13. Rene Mauricio ALVARADO SANCHEZ, aged 18, 22 July 1981
14. Victor Manuel MARIN RIVAS, aged 17, arrested 17 June 1981
15. Carlos Alberto BARRERA, aged 24, 22 March 1981
16. Vladimir GONZALEZ, aged 33, arrested 10 January 1981

Background information

Human rights violations on a massive scale in El Salvador continue to be brought to the attention of Amnesty International. Amnesty International is aware that these 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, including torture, "disappearance" and cold-blooded murder, being carried out by the Salvadorian security forces, and directed against people not involved in guerrilla activities. Testimonies received by Amnesty International implicate all branches of the Salvadorian security forces in gross abuses of human rights.

In a letter dated 6 May 1981 Amnesty International called on the United States Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, to take steps to ensure that the USA did not give El Salvador's government military aid which would be used for murder, torture and other abuses. The letter cited 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 about the arrests of these 16 people and urging the authorities to do everything possible to ensure their physical safety. Please request an explanation of their arrest and urge that they be released immediately unless charged and brought before a court of law.

APPEALS TO:

Coronel Jaime Abdul Gutierrez
Vicepresidente de la Junta de El Salvador
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Dr Fidel Chávez Mena
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Calle Santa Tecla
San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Orientación (newspaper of the Archbishopric)
Arzobispado de San Salvador
Seminario San Jose de la Montaña, San Salvador, El Salvador

and to Salvadorian diplomatic representatives in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Appeals may continue until
14 September 1981

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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.

In order to ensure that each individual's name is included in at least some appeals, the following national sections are asked to appeal in particular for:

AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA cases 1 and 2
BANGLADESH
BARBADOS
BELGIUM

FRANCE
GREECE cases 5 and 6
HONG KONG (group)
ICELAND
IRELAND

LUXEMBOURG
MEXICO cases 9 and 10
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
NIGERIA

SWITZERLAND
TRINIDAD (group)
UNITED KINGDOM
USA cases 14, 15 and 16
VENEZUELA

CANADA
DENMARK cases 3 and 4
FAROE ISLANDS
FINLAND
FRG

INDIA
ISRAEL cases 7 and 8
ITALY
IVORY COAST
JAPAN

NORWAY
PUERTO RICO (group)
SPAIN cases 11, 12 and 13
SRI LANKA
SWEDEN