

**URGENT  
ACTION**

**amnesty  
international**

**URGENT  
ACTION**

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.* AI Index: AMR 29/73/81  
Distr: UA  
(Amnesty International Statute, Article 1(c))

UA 249/81

"Disappearance"/Health Concern

15 October 1981

EL SALVADOR: José Orlando CASTELLÓN, aged 22  
=====

José Orlando Castellón was found on 13 October, together with two dead bodies, by the roadside of El Troncal de Norte (leading from San Salvador to Apopa). All three had been shot but Sr. Castellón was the only survivor and was taken to the ROSALES hospital in an ambulance (No. 14) of the Red Cross. Sr. Castellón was captured a few days earlier by members of the security forces. (It is unclear at present whether the army or other security units were involved in his detention.) AI has received reports that his condition is serious, although he is not in immediate danger.

National and international journalists who have tried to obtain a testimony from Sr. Castellón at the Rosales hospital have been prevented from seeing him by members of the security forces.

AI has received information on other cases in the past where wounded people, or doctors treating them, have been abducted from hospital. On 21 May 1980 Professor Lionel MENENDEZ was taken to the Rosales hospital after being shot, where he was given an anaesthetic in preparation for an operation. He was abducted from the operating theatre by armed men while the hospital was reportedly surrounded by vehicles belonging to the National Guard and National Police. Professor Menendez's whereabouts remain unknown. On 28 August 1980 Dr. Fernando Arturo Melendez and his assistant Dr. José Elisio Orellana were arrested together with two patients they were treating for shot wounds in the Santa Eugenia private clinic, San Miguelito, San Salvador. The two patients were eventually located in the Rosales hospital, but the whereabouts of the two doctors remain unknown. (UA 104/80 AMR 29/21/80; UA 199/80 AMR 29/44/80 and AMR 29/46/80)

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 of human rights 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, "disappearances" 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.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/express letters/letters expressing serious concern for the safety of Sr. Castellón in view of previous incidents of abductions at the Rosales and other hospitals. Request that the authorities undertake every possible step to ensure that his physical safety be guaranteed while he is in hospital.

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS/DOCTORS are particularly urged to participate. If possible, please arrange for one important doctor per section to contact the Rosales hospital direct in order to enquire about the situation of this patient. (Tel: San Salvador 23.38.66)

JOURNALISTS could also be asked to appeal for journalists in the country to be allowed access to the patient in the interest of freedom of information.

APPEALS TO:

Dr José Ramón AVALOS NAVARRETE (Min. of Health)  
Ministro de Salud Pública  
Ministerio de Salud Pública  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Coronel José Guillermo García  
Ministro de Defensa y Seguridad  
Pública  
Ministerio de Defensa y Seguridad  
Pública  
Casa Presidencial  
San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Comité Nacional de Defensa de los Pacientes, Trabajadores  
y Instituciones de Salud  
Decanato Facultad de Medicina  
Universidad de El Salvador, San Salvador, El Salvador  
(Committee for defence of patients, workers & health institutions)

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

and to El Salvador diplomatic representatives in your country.

DO NOT USE AI'S NAME IN APPEALS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Please send appeals as soon as possible. They may continue until Urgent Action appeal. Copy read the Recommended Action.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 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:</p> <p>Article 3, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";</p> <p>Article 5, "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment";</p> <p>Article 9, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile".</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The name of Amnesty International can be used unless stated otherwise; although, letters written in a private or professional capacity may be more effective.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Information about the ill-treatment of any person with an organization which is banned in their country is provided as background only and should not be included in appeals.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 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".</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 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.</p> |
|---|--|