

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 29/08/96

UA 176/96

Fear for safety

10 July 1996

EL SALVADOR

Francisco Elías Valencia, newspaper editor,
Monsignor Gregorio Rosa Chávez, Auxiliary Bishop of San Salvador,
Francisco Roberto Lima, lawyer and opposition politician,
Jorge Zedan, television station proprietor,
Mauricio Funes, newspaper director,
Kiria Waldo Salgado, opposition politician,
Roberto Castaneda, radio station proprietor,
Facundo Guardo, opposition politician,
Gerson Martínez, opposition politician,
Ricardo Navarro, director of environmental organization,
Victoria Marina Velásquez de Avilés, National Human Rights Procurator,
Rodolfo Cardenal, Vice Rector of Social Planning, Centroamerican University,
Edgar Palacios, Coordinator of the Permanent Commission for National Debate (*Comité Permanente para el Debate Nacional*),
Medardo Gómez, Lutheran bishop,
Carlos Avilés, narcotics expert

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of a group of people named in a communiqué which appeared in the daily Salvadorean newspaper *El Diario de Hoy*, in late June, signed by a newly-formed clandestine group calling itself the *Fuerza Nacionalista Roberto d'Aubuisson* (FURODA), Roberto d'Aubuisson Nationalist Force.

The group, named after the now deceased founder of the ARENA party which is currently in power, threatened several public figures, among them the editor of the newspaper *Diario Latino*, Francisco Elías Valencia, Monsignor Gregorio Rosa Chávez, Auxiliary Bishop of San Salvador, and Francisco Roberto Lima, former candidate for the vice-presidency for the *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN), Farbundo Martí National Liberation Front. The statement refers to them as "worms" (*gusanos*) and warns "your days are numbered" (*sus días están contados*)... "We are warning you that from now on we have prepared the conditions to inflict exemplary punishment on those who attempt to interfere with the democratic process in El Salvador" (*Queremos decirles, que desde este momento hemos preparado condiciones para dar un escarmiento ejemplar a los que pretenden hacer abortar el proceso democrático salvadoreño*). Many of those named in the communiqué have publicly expressed their commitment to human rights and democracy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

El Salvador is emerging from of an armed conflict which lasted from 1980 until 1992. During that period the activities of death squads was of great concern to Amnesty International (for more information, see *Peace Without Justice*, AMR 29/12/93) as they were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of people. Although there have been important improvements since the end of the war, the continued existence of these clandestine armed groups is still of concern (see UA 427/93, AMR 29/21/93, and UA 243/94, AMR 29/11/94). Throughout 1995, Amnesty International received further reports

of harassment and threats against members of non-governmental organizations by such groups.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing serious concern for the safety of Francisco Elías Valencia, Gregorio Rosa Chávez and Francisco Roberto Lima, and others named by FURODA in its statement published in *El Diario de Hoy*;
- calling for immediate and effective measures to ensure their protection, including a full investigation of the threats, in order to bring those responsible to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President of El Salvador

Dr. Armando Calderón Sol
Presidente de la República de El Salvador
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: Presidente Calderón, San Salvador, El Salvador

Telexes: 20245 RS SAL; 20522 PRESS SAL

Faxes: +503 271 0950

Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Mario Acosta Oertel
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: Ministro Interior, San Salvador, El Salvador

Faxes: +503 271 2484

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Procurator for Human Rights

Dra. Victoria Marina Velásquez de Avilés
Procuradora para la Defensa de los
Derechos Humanos de El Salvador
9a. Avenida Nte. y Calle Poniente
Edificio Amsa No. 535, San Salvador
El Salvador

Newspapers

Sr. Jefe de Redacción
La Prensa Gráfica
3a. Calle Poniente No. 130
San Salvador, El Salvador

Sr. Jefe de Redacción
Diario Latino
23 Av. Sur No. 225
Apartado Postal 96,

San Salvador, El Salvador

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 August 1996.