

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 159/99

Fear for Safety / Death threats

12 November 1999

EL SALVADOR

William Hernández, director of a non-governmental organization working with sexual minorities

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of William Hernández after he received a number of telephone death threats on 5 November 1999.

The caller apparently rang his offices three times asking to speak to him and threatening to come to the office to kill him. They said they knew how to get to the office, gave an accurate physical description of him and said "*digale a ese hijo de puta que no salga esta noche*" ("tell that son of a bitch not to leave tonight").

William Hernández is the executive director of the non-governmental organization, "*Entre Amigos*", (Between Friends), *Asociación Salvadoreña de Desarrollo Integral para Minorías Sexuales* (Salvadorean Integral Development Association for Sexual Minorities), in the capital, San Salvador. The organization gives sex education to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, as well as to the wider public. It has also spoken out about human rights violations against sexual minorities and the failure of the authorities to investigate such abuses.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

"*Entre Amigos*" have reported several cases of intimidation of and violence against sexual minorities and those involved with the work of the organization: on 7 March 1999, William Hernández was issued with a death threat; during Lesbian and Gay Pride celebrations on 26 June a member of the Presidential Battalion violently threatened a transgender person taking part; a few days later a community member was shot and injured as he stepped out of the "*Entre Amigos*" offices with William Hernández.

In August 1999, members of the National Civilian Police in another district beat and insulted six homosexuals, threatening them with death. Several members of sexual minorities were also reportedly killed last year. No thorough investigations are known to have been carried out or anyone brought to trial in connection with these cases.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of William Hernández, executive director of "*Entre Amigos*", after three telephone calls threatening him with death were made to his offices on 5 November 1999;
- calling on the authorities to guarantee his safety;
- asking them to open a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation into the death threats against William Hernández, to make the findings public and to bring those responsible to justice;
- expressing concern about and asking for thorough investigations into threats to and the murder of sexual minorities and those who work with them.

#### APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic  
S.E. Francisco Flores  
Presidente de la República  
Casa Presidencial  
Avda. Los Diplomáticos,  
Bº San Jacinto  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Telegrams: Presidente, San Salvador, El Salvador**  
**Faxes: + 503 281 0018 / 243 4912**  
**E-mails: webmaster@casapres.gob.sv**  
**Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President**

Minister of Interior  
Lic. Mario Acosta  
Ministro del Interior  
Ministerio del Interior

Centro de Gobierno  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Telegrams: Ministro Interior, San Salvador, El Salvador**  
**Faxes: + 503 281 5959**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

Minister of Public Security  
Dr. Francisco Bertrand Galindo  
Ministro de Seguridad Pública  
Ministerio de Seguridad Pública  
6a. Calle Oriente y 8a. Avenida Sur, No.42  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Telegrams: Ministro Seguridad Pública, San Salvador, El Salvador**  
**Faxes: + 503 271 2022**  
**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

William Hernández  
Asociación Entre Amigos, Avenida y Colonia Santa Victoria, No.50  
Costado Norte Boulevard de los Héroes, San Salvador, El Salvador.  
**E-mails: entreamigos@salnet.net; Faxes: + 503 225 4213 / 235 1640**

Human Rights Procurator  
Lic. Eduardo Peñate Polanco  
Procurador de Derechos Humanos  
Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (PDDH)  
9a. Avenida Norte y 5a. Calle Poniente, Edificio AMSA, No. 535  
San Salvador, El Salvador.  
**E-mails: dipddh@gob.sv; Faxes: + 503 271 2886**

National Newspapers  
El Diario De Hoy, 11 Calle Oriente, 271, San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Faxes: + 503 271 3329; E-mails: redaccion@elsalvador.com**

La Prensa Gráfica, Final Boulevard Sta Elena, Calle Conchagua  
Antiguo Cuscatlan, Dpto de la Libertad, San Salvador, El Salvador  
**Faxes: + 503 289 1802/1; E-mails: lpg@laprensa.com.sv**

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 23 December 1999.