

PUBLIC

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UA 268/08 Fear of torture or other ill-treatment

MEXICO **Carlos Solís Reina (m), journalist**
Luis Alberto Salas Barajas (m)

Local journalist Carlos Solís Reina and Luis Alberto Salas Barajas were arrested by the Federal Preventive Police (*Policía Federal Preventiva*, PFP) on 15 September in Matamoros, Tamaulipas state, after the car in which they were travelling was shot at by members of the PFP. A 17-year-old girl walking nearby died as a result of the shooting. Amnesty International is concerned that the two men may be at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

According to eyewitnesses, Carlos Solís Reina and Luis Alberto Salas Barajas were travelling in a car in Matamoros City when PFP officials blocked the vehicle's path. The PFP were carrying out an anti-narcotics operation at the time. Then the car was shot at, and the two men were immediately arrested. The two were detained and taken to the Attorney General of the Republic's Office (*Procuraduría General de la República*, PGR) in Mexico City. When the men's families enquired about their whereabouts, they were told that the two were receiving medical treatment in hospital. As the two men were in good health when they were arrested, their families fear that they may have been tortured in order to force them to confess to killing the girl.

The Ministry of Public Security claimed in an official statement that at the time of the shooting the PFP were trying to prevent the two men from assaulting the girl and had to respond to shots fired by the attackers. They also blame the two men for killing the girl. However, according to eyewitnesses, all the shots fired came from the police. The local Attorney General's Office has reported that the bullets recovered from the scene and from the body of the girl are from the same calibre of gun used by the PFP.

Carlos Solís Reina and Luis Alberto Salas Barajas are currently in pre-charge detention (*arraigo*) in a secure building in Mexico City, where they have restricted access to lawyers and family.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to ensure that Carlos Solís Reina and Luis Alberto Salas Barajas are protected from torture or other ill-treatment;
- urging them to ensure that the two men have access to independent legal counsel;
- calling for assurances that any evidence obtained under duress will not be used against them in legal proceedings;
- calling for an impartial investigation into allegations that the two men may have suffered torture or ill-treatment;
- calling for them to be formally charged or released;
- calling on them to order a full, prompt and impartial investigation of the 15 September fatal shooting of the 17-years-old girl in Matamoros, to publish the results, and to bring those responsible to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General of the Republic
Lic. Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza
Procurador General de la República

Procuraduría General de la República
Av. Paseo de la Reforma n° 211-213, Piso 16
Col. Cuauhtémoc, Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P. 06500, MÉXICO

Fax: (+52 55) 53 46 09 08

Salutation: Señor Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

Minister of Public Security

Lic. Genaro García Luna
Secretario de Seguridad Pública
Secretaría de Seguridad Pública
Constituyentes n° 947, edif. "B" planta alta
Col. Belén de las Flores, Del. Álvaro Obregón
México D.F., C.P. 01110, MÉXICO

Fax: (+52 55) 1103 6189

Email: genaro.garcia@ssp.gob.mx

Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister

Tamaulipas State Attorney General

Lic. José Guadalupe Herrera Bustamante
Procurador General de Justicia del Estado de Tamaulipas
Av. José Sulaimán Chagnón cruce con Libramiento Naciones Unidas
Ciudad Victoria 87089
Tamaulipas, MÉXICO

E-Mail: pgj@tamaulipas.gob.mx

Fax: (+52 834) 318 5100 (if someone answers, please say, "me da tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Dear Attorney/ Señor Procurador

President of the National Human Rights Commission

Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández
Presidente de la Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos (CNDH)
Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos
Edificio "Héctor Fix Zamudio", 6° piso
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and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 October 2008.