

PUBLIC

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Death threats / fear for safety / torture 7 July 1999

MEXICO

Diocelina Rosas Suazo and family

José Valencia Miranda and family

Lino González Espinoza, husband of Diocelina Rosas Suazo

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Diocelina Rosas Suazo, José Valencia Miranda and their families. They have been threatened with death, reportedly having bullets sent to their homes and facing attempted abductions, after they appealed to the authorities on behalf of Lino González Espinoza, Diocelina Rosas's husband.

Lino González Espinoza, a peasant from Michoacan state, was reportedly arbitrarily arrested on 25 June 1999 by the *Policía Judicial del Estado* (PJE), State Judicial Police, and taken to the Coahuayana prison. According to information received by Amnesty International he was tortured in an attempt to make him confess to a murder he says he did not commit. A local human rights defender who visited Lino González claims to have seen torture marks left on his body.

Amnesty International has been told that the detention of Lino González and the subsequent threats against Diocelina Rosas, José Valencia and their families, from the Municipality of Coahuayana, Michoacan State, could be linked to their campaign against an armed group of landowners who, with the apparent acquiescence of the authorities, have reportedly been buying agricultural land, forcing peasants off it and selling it. Lino González and other locals presented an official complaint to the *Procuraduría del Estado*, State Attorney General's Office, about this, but the authorities have apparently done nothing to investigate their complaint.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has previously reported that the Public Prosecutor's Office and officers of the *Policía Judicial* (PJ), Judicial Police, frequently use torture to obtain confessions and statements. Courts are not allowed to accept confessions and information obtained under torture as evidence, but frequently do so.

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

- expressing your concern at the threats against Diocelina Rosas Suazo and José Valencia Miranda, and their families, and calling for the authorities to take steps to guarantee their safety;
- asking that the reported torture of Lino González Espinoza be thoroughly investigated, that the findings be made public and that any officials found responsible be brought to justice;
- calling for Lino González Espinoza to be given adequate access to doctors, lawyers and his family, while in detention;
- urging that no statements made under torture by Lino González be used as evidence against him;
- calling on the authorities to implement the recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in its November 1998 *Report on the situation of human rights in Mexico*, which calls for the adoption of measures toward ensuring that acts of torture are characterized and punished as such by courts, in accordance with the international definition of torture.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of the State of Michoacán

Lic. Victor Manuel Tinoco Rubí
Gobernador del Estado de
Michoacán
Palacio de Gobierno,
Av. Madero No. 639
Morelia 58009
Estado de Michoacán
MEXICO

Fax: + 52 43 12 61 10

Salutation: Sr Gobernador/Dear Governor

State Attorney General

Lic. Jorge Eduardo García Torres
Procurador del Estado de Michoacán
Perférico Independencia, No. 5000
Morelia 58110
Estado de Michoacán
MEXICO

Fax: + 52 43 16 3808 ext.165

Salutation: Estimado Sr. Procurador/Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

State Commission for Human Rights

Lic. Manuel Jiménez Gonzalez
Presidente de la Comisión Estatal
de Derechos Humanos del Michoacán
Calle: 15 de octubre No 74
Col. Lomas Hidalgo
54280, Morelia, Michoacán
MEXICO

Fax: + 52 43 15 7371

Centro de Derechos Humanos

"Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" A.C.

Serapio Rendon 57-B
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MEXICO

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 19 August 1999.