

URGENT ACTION



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Note: Please write on behalf of these persons even though you may not have received the original UA when issued on January 12, 2010. Thanks!

Further information on UA 09/10 (12 January 2010) – Enforced disappearance

MEXICO **Jose Ángel Alvarado Herrera (m),**
Nitza Paola Alvarado Espinoza (f)
Rocío Irene Alvarado Reyes (f)

One of the three people unlawfully arrested by the army on 29 December was able to make a phone call on 4 February. None of the three has had any other contact with the outside world, and they are believed to have been subjected to enforced disappearance.

Nitza Paola Alvarado Espinoza managed to make a phone call to a friend on 4 February. She was crying and said, “Please help me, get me out of here, I’m scared” (*por favor ayudenme, saquenme de aqui, tengo miedo*). At that moment the friend heard two men talking, one of whom said, “Bloody bitch, she is phoning, I told you not to leave her alone!” (*pinche vieja culera ya habló, te dije que no la dejaras sola!*) and the line was cut.

She was last seen on 29 December, with her relatives Jose Ángel Alvarado Herrera and Rocío Irene Alvarado Reyes, being arrested by 10 soldiers, who did not show any arrest warrant or give any explanation. The three, who have not been seen since, are from Buenaventura municipality, Chihuahua state.

Two days after the phone call, a group of soldiers in a Humvee armored jeep arrived at the home of José Ángel Alvarado’s mother, and asked her a series of personal questions about herself and the three arrested on 29 December. They did not say why they were asking the questions, and told a neighbor who saw them going into the house that there would be consequences for him if he told anyone about they had been there.

The military authorities have denied being involved in the detention of the three, and have not explained why the army impounded José Ángel Alvarado's car a few days later and handed it to the local prosecutor’s office.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since 2007, violence linked to organized crime has spiraled in Mexico: the media reported more than 6500 drug cartel-related killings in 2009, the majority of them in Chihuahua state. President Calderón’s administration deployed 50,000 troops to combat organized crime in the worst affected areas, particularly Ciudad Juárez. This has resulted in increasing reports of human rights violations committed by the military carrying out policing operations, including enforced disappearances, unlawful killings and torture. In November 2009 Amnesty International issued a report, *Mexico: New reports of human rights violations by the military*, AMR 41/058/2009 documenting cases of enforced disappearance in Ciudad Juárez, in which the military have continued to deny being involved despite compelling evidence. These cases are routinely investigated and tried by the military justice system, which does not guarantee an impartial and independent investigation, resulting in impunity for the vast majority of perpetrators. As a result

Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

victims and their relatives are denied an effective recourse to justice, and military officials are aware that they are extremely unlikely to be held to account.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- Expressing concern that Jose Angél Alvarado Herrera, Nitza Paola Alvarado Espinoza and Rocío Irene Alvarado Reyes appear to have been subjected to enforced disappearance by the army;
- Calling on the authorities to take immediate steps to find out what has happened to the three;
- Urging them to either formally charge them with a recognizably criminal offense or release them;
- Urging them to protect the three from torture or other ill-treatment;
- Urging them to protect the families of the three from intimidation and reprisals;
- Asking them to order an impartial civilian investigation into this arbitrary detention.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General of the Republic

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**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Señor
Procurador General**

Ministry of Defense

Gral. Guillermo Galván Galván
Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional
Blvd. Manuel Ávila Camacho s/n, esq. Av. Industria
Militar, Col. Lomas de Sotelo, Del. Miguel Hidalgo,
México D.F., C.P. 11640, MEXICO

Fax: 011 52 55 53952935

Salutation: Señor Secretario/ Dear Minister

Governor of Chihuahua State

Lic. José Reyes Baeza Terrazas
Gobernador del Estado de Chihuahua, Palacio de
Gobierno, 1er piso, C. Aldama #901, Col. Centro,
Chihuahua, Estado de Chihuahua, C.P. 31000,
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**Fax: 011 52 614 429 3300
(then dial extension 11066 when
prompted)**

Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

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PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.

Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 26 March 2010.