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CHILE

ORIGINAL

SECRET DETENTION CENTRES STILL IN OPERATION

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SUMMARY

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The CNI, Chile's state security police, is still using secret detention centres to interrogate and torture political detainees, despite legislation passed in June 1987 forbidding them to keep people in detention. In addition, some individuals arrested by the CNI said they had been kept shut up in vans for several hours and beaten before being handed over to the police or courts while others have been interrogated and tortured by the CNI in police stations run by the criminal investigations police [Investigaciones]. Uniformed police, carabineros, are also reported to have tortured a few detainees.

Amnesty International has received numerous testimonies since the enactment of the 1987 legislation which reveal that torture is still being inflicted by the security services, even though somewhat more selectively than previously. Extracts from some of the accounts were published last year. (See AMR 22/36/87 and AMR 22/50/87.)

This document includes descriptions of six cases, together with personal testimony, whose subjects were arrested without warrant, five during the last quarter of 1987 and one in March 1988, and who said they were severely tortured both physically and psychologically. Some were held incommunicado illegally for long periods, hence deprived of access to legal counsel and relatives and in several of the cases other irregularities are described such as threats by court officials.

This summarizes an 13-page document, Chile: Secret Detention Centres Still in Operation AI Index: AMR 22/25/88, issued by Amnesty International in May 1988. Anyone wishing to have further details or to take action on this issue should consult the full document.

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CHILE

SECRET DETENTION CENTRES STILL IN OPERATION

Secret detention centres are still being used by the Central Nacional de Informaciones (CNI - state security police) for the torture and interrogation of political detainees in Chile, in spite of legislation passed in June 1987 which prohibits them from holding detainees. The CNI has most frequently been held responsible for torture since its creation in 1978. Between 17 March and 7 April 1988, at least three detainees said they were transferred blindfold to an unidentified detention centre for several hours and tortured by CNI personnel. Raúl and Miguel Cardenas Alvarez, for example, were arrested at 07.00h on 17 March and only taken to an investigaciones police station that night. Ruth Cabrera Hinojosa, arrested at 09.30h on 23 March, was not taken to investigaciones until 22.30h. Where were they held, asked the Vicariate of Solidarity in a document presented to the Santiago Appeals Court on 13 May 1988, during those hours before they were handed over to investigaciones? Other recent reports indicate that detainees have been held by the CNI for hours in vehicles, some equipped with portable electric shock machines, where they were interrogated, beaten and subjected to other forms of torture before being handed over to the courts or to the regular police or released. A third pattern that has emerged since the law came into force is interrogation and torture by the CNI in police stations run by Investigaciones (criminal investigations police.) A smaller number of detainees are reported to have been tortured by carabineros (uniformed police), usually in cases where detainees are suspected of having participated in the killing or injuring of carabinero officers.

Only days after the new law concerning arrests by the CNI was introduced in June 1987 a young man was tortured with electricity at his girlfriend's home. The torture continued in an investigaciones police station. (See AMR 22/50/87: Torture Continues: The Cases of Ricardo Campos, Luis Tricot and Jorge Martínez.) Since then, numerous testimonies have been received by Amnesty International which lead to the disturbing conclusion that, though torture may be used more selectively, it is still being practised by the security forces. Extracts from some of these accounts were published last year (see AMR 22/50/87 and AMR 22/36/87). This

document contains parts of the testimonies of five detainees arrested in the last quarter of 1987 and one man held in March 1988. All but two of the detainees describe how they were taken to unidentified premises used as detention centres for between one and two days before being taken to an Investigaciones police station. One detainee was taken several times from a police station to premises run by the CNI, while another was removed from prison and taken to a CNI detention centre. Two detainees said they were tortured by carabineros.

In addition to the torture, the cases highlight a number of other irregularities which limit the protection of detainees in police custody and also their rights to a fair trial.

1) Arrest without Warrant/Unacknowledged Detention

The detainees were arrested without warrant and in two cases held for several days in unacknowledged detention. The arrest of Max Díaz was only made known five days later. In the case of Karin Eitel, she was effectively "disappeared" for four days before Investigaciones confirmed her arrest. The CNI, who had arrested her, denied that she was being held in their custody. The judge who dealt with the petition for amparo submitted on her behalf also later complained to the head of Investigaciones that one of its officers had refused Karin's lawyers permission to look at the public register of detainees when they went to a police station to see if she was being held there. The judge also asked a criminal court to investigate possible charges against the CNI of illegal detention. Others living in the house where Karin Eitel was arrested were kept under house arrest by the CNI for 24 hours until the judge went there to investigate. The CNI left saying that it had been "a mistake".

2) Prolonged Incomunicado Detention

The practice of holding detainees incomunicado for long periods after their arrest and transfer to prison has continued in 1988. Between January and mid-April 1988, at least two people were held for up to 25 days incomunicado, 3 up to 15 days, and 17 up to ten days. Prolonged incomunicado detention is of particular concern because it deprives the detainees of access to legal counsel even though legal proceedings have begun against them, and also because in a number of cases the detainees were tortured during the days immediately following arrest. The effects of the torture is aggravated by a further period without access to family and lawyers. Of the 25 people held incomunicado for between ten and 25 days, ten said they had been tortured or ill-treated before being handed over to the courts.

In several cases last year, the incomunicado detention period was extended even further. Juan Cancino and Max Diaz, whose testimonies are included in this document, were held for 46 and 36 days respectively in incomunicado detention after their arrest, during which time they were given no access to lawyers or their families. Given the fact that they

had both been badly tortured during the first few days after their arrest, this prolonged incommunicado detention can only be described as another form of psychological torture. According to human rights lawyers the periods of incommunicado detention were illegal and almost certainly extended mainly for the purpose of allowing the marks of torture to disappear.

3) Treatment of Tortured Detainees by the Courts

When detainees are eventually presented to the courts after a period of police detention, they are sometimes unable to denounce the ill-treatment due to the atmosphere of intimidation and, often, the presence of the same police agents who participated in the torture sessions. Some detainees have said that they were unaware that they were in the presence of court officials, believing themselves still to be in police custody. Of the cases described in this document, two include allegations that the prisoners were threatened by court officials. Domingo Sarmiento, arrested in March 1988, reported that while in the III Fiscalía Militar "*I was interrogated in the presence of those who tortured me. They continued threatening that something would happen to my wife and son. The clerk or court official took out his pistol, cocked the trigger and put it on his desk...*" Max Díaz, arrested in December 1987, also alleges that he was threatened by a court official who told him that his wife and children were in detention and warned him that the same treatment would be given to them if he didn't sign a statement confessing what they wanted him to. He said he signed through fear, but discovered later that his family had never been arrested.

Guarantees of a fair trial were violated in the case of Karin Eitel by the showing on television of a video of Karin Eitel, which had been filmed while she was still in the hands of the CNI and in which she is seen confessing to having taken part in the kidnapping of an army colonel. The video was shown without warning, and before she had been given access to her lawyer. Karin claims that the video was edited and distorted what had happened at the interrogation. She said that the video had also been edited to give the impression that her lawyer knew of her activities. The showing of the video not only violates international norms which stipulate that "everyone...shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to the law" (Art. 14.2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by Chile) and "not to be compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt" (art 14.3g) but also Chilean legislation in accordance with which the trial papers were being kept secret.

The video of Karin Eitel was particularly distressing for her family, as she had difficulty speaking and it showed the distortion of her face due to the torture she had been subjected to.

DOMINGO FAUSTINO SARMIENTO FLORES, 22, tradesman and member of local human rights organization.

"I was arrested illegally at about 10.00a.m. on 10 March at my home..The carabineros who arrested me took me out of the house, which wasn't raided until the following day when the CNI came..."

Hooded, he was taken to a police station where "they stripped me and took me into a dark room where they tied me to a chair and kicked and beat me in the ribs and head. At the same time they applied electricity to my legs, testicles, ears, nipples, penis, hands and the top of my spine. Those who tortured me were the same men who arrested me..and they were the same ones who took me before the Military Prosecutor's office.

They applied the electric shocks with a type of metal clips similar to those used to connect car batteries.

After that they tied me to a metal bedframe, where they continued to apply electric shocks and interrogate me. They threatened to kill me and to arrest, rape and kill my wife. They also threatened to strangle my little son to death....

They took me out into a yard and carried out a mock execution. (They cocked the trigger of their weapons, or pretended to, because in fact they were not loaded. They said they they would kill me and stage a mock confrontation. They would take me to the site of the recent attack [on police] kill me, at the same time accusing me of having participated in it and stating that I had died when I opened fire on the security forces. They turned on the engine of the vehicle as if to take me away and parked it by my side but in the end they didn't make me get in it.

Then they took me back to a cell, and tightened the blindfold and the hood." Another group of interrogators arrived, "I suppose they were a special branch of carabineros or the CNI because from the type of questions and the way in which they were asked they appeared to be better trained and more skilled...

They stripped me again (as I had been made to dress to go into the yard), tied me up and suspended me [upside down] from a pole [the pau de arara technique], applying electric shocks to the anus, testicles and penis. They kept me like this for 3-4 hours. After getting me down they tied me to a chair, wet me and pulled off a toenail which caused heavy bleeding which they stopped by putting a tourniquet. Then they suspended me again...

Because I was twisting with pain on the floor, my blindfold slipped and I could see five men, one of whom I recognised as having arrested me." After being taken to a cell for a while, "the next thing they did was to severely beat me in the kidneys and back and at the same time they threw chilli powder in my eyes which obviously caused me great pain...Lastly,

about ten people beat me almost hysterically, throwing me against the walls. Beneath the blindfold I could see the green hems of the carabineros uniform."

Domingo Sarmiento is currently in the Santiago Penitentiary on charges under the Arms Control Law. In November 1987, his brother was abducted and beaten by unidentified civilians who interrogated him about Domingo and warned that they would kill him.

MAX HORACIO DIAZ TRUJILLO

"I was arrested on 8 December 1987..in Santiago as I was on my way to a friend's house by heavily armed plainclothed individuals in a white utility van and a taxi. They forced me into the utility van, punching and kicking me. Inside, they threw me to the floor, covering me with a blanket while one of the men sat on my shoulders pointing his machinegun at my head...My nightmare began.

The vehicle set off in an unknown direction through the streets of Santiago. Throughout the journey I was constantly punched in the head and threatened that I and my family would be killed. After about 35 minutes, we arrived at a place apparently outside the city because I couldn't hear any noise except the sound of the birds. After opening a metal door the van went in. I was forced to get out. My eyes were blindfolded and my hands handcuffed, but before they did so I was able to see a yellow or cream coloured private house. They took me inside. There I felt the presence of other people and had the impression that the place wasn't furnished.

I remained standing, handcuffed and blindfolded for a few minutes until a man who pretended to be nice came up to me and said "look if you behave yourself and assist us you can go before the prosecutor. If you don't you could disappear, as we have all the facilities to do what we want. I immediately thought about the probability of what they might do as I remembered the five young people who had disappeared after their arrest in sept 1987, about whom nothing had been known since. ...I told them I couldn't cooperate because I didn't know anything. The man went away and the other side of the coin showed itself, evil personified. His interrogation began with questions about my name and grade in the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front. I told him my name and that I didn't belong to the Front. He became furious saying that ..if I didn't cooperate, he was capable of arresting my family and torturing them without taking into consideration the fact that they might be women or children. I insisted that I didn't know what he was talking about to which he responded "this bastard son of a bitch doesn't want to cooperate." He ordered me to strip and began what they called the "fiesta". They took me to the bathroom where there was a tub of water full of water, urine and other items. They forced me to kneel down at the edge of it, punching me in the head. They alternately questioned me and pushed my head into the tub until I almost drowned. This went on for hours..."

After being allowed to dress he was taken in a vehicle to various places and then back to the house where he had been held before.

"They made me undress and took me again to the bathroom, forced me through punches to kneel at the edge of the tub and began plunging my head into it again until I couldn't breathe. Between each ducking, when they pulled my head out, they beat both my ears with their open palms. That is how I came to know what they called the "telephone." The blows were very hard and left me almost unconscious, almost without a sense of direction. The duckings in the nasty liquid continued too, one after another. This went on for hours. Hours of absolute defencelessness, at their mercy. Then they stood me up - I was still naked - and they all began to punch me in the pit of the stomach until they grew tired. They made me get dressed once more, took me to a room and forced me to lie on a bedframe. They handcuffed me, covered me with blankets and over these placed some straps with which they tied me to the bed. In front of my face there was a strong light. Then they told me I could sleep but that if I moved I would be a dead man...

In the morning they took me off the bed and led me to a passage outside the house. I was made to stand there for about 3/4 of an hour feeling the sun on my body, until I was forced into a car and they took me to the same parts of the city as we had been to the day before. They kept insisting I tell them where the alleged safe house was. I didn't have the faintest idea. This made them desperate and angry. They began to beat me up again inside the car and to give me electric shocks using a portable machine they had there. For the purposes of this journey they had taken off my blindfold. The most curious and horrible aspect to all this was the fact that they were torturing me in full view of passers-by. At one point they went up to a policeman whom they asked, without identifying themselves, if he had seen me in the neighbourhood. The policeman said he hadn't. ..They blindfolded me again and we set off back. Their anger was increasing as they hadn't got any results. We arrived at the same house. As I got out of the vehicle, a woman took my arm. She talked obscenely and aggressively. From the other side a man pointed a pistol in my back. They took me to another room in the house. There the woman ordered me to wait. After a while, a group of people for want of anything else to call them, arrived and again forced me to strip naked and lie down on the floor. Then they began to give me electric shocks all over my body; to the earlobes, stomach, testicles, chest, spine, ankles. I thought I was going to explode. I lost consciousness several times. This went on all that day. Every so often they left me lying on the floor... Then they came back and it all began again....In the afternoon they got tired of not getting any results and took me to another room. But it didn't end there. They all began punching and kicking me until they got tired or bored. Then they put me in the shower and afterwards let me dress.

It was almost nighttime. They took me outside and put me in a van where I had to wait for a good while. Three people got in and we set off

for an unknown destination. According to them we were setting off on a voyage of no return because I hadn't collaborated. They said that afterwards it would be my family's turn. They drove around on for a long time. Then they stopped the car. One of them put a pistol to my chest, then to my head, cocked the trigger, and then put it back to my head. "What's your last wish?" he asked. I asked him to let me see my family, to which he replied that I couldn't as my family were all in their hands. Then, he proceeded to press the trigger, with the pistol at my head, at the same time as someone fired another shot from the vehicle (probably taking the gun outside the van.) I remained there. I can't explain how I felt. It was like I was dying because even though they hadn't killed me physically, at that moment, something (...)like death seemed to invade me.

Then they took me, after this mock execution, to the south of the city to the investigaciones police station near Vicuña Mackenna street where I remained for ten days until taken before the prosecutor.

During this time I was able to pull myself together a little. I was in a very bad state. I was quite deaf, my neck had collapsed, I couldn't lift my head. I had burns all over my body from the electric shocks, bruises, sharp stomach pains and constant colitis which I am still suffering from a month and a half after my arrest.

"The treatment in the police station was relatively good apart from a few exceptions. There I realised that the individuals who had arrested me and tortured me for two days were apparently not from Investigaciones but from the CNI or a special branch of Investigaciones as these individuals came to the police station making it quite obvious they didn't belong there... They keep coming back to continue their interrogations, this time they only threatened me...."

Max Díaz is currently in the Cárcel Pública in Santiago on charges under the Anti-terrorist Law.

KARIN EITEL, language student, 25

Karin Eitel was arrested in the early hours of the morning of 2 November at a friend's house and taken to an unofficial detention centre. The CNI remained in the house keeping under guard 2 adults and three minors aged between 5 and 12 for 24 hours without warrant. They finally left after 24 hours when a judge went to the house.

"I remember that I was asleep when they came to arrest me. I woke up to the noise of heavy blows and then someone shouting "We're going to bomb the house! Get out!" That's how the nightmare began.

They immediately blindfolded me and I had scarcely got out of the vehicle on arrival at one of their detention centres than the interrogation began. There were about twenty or thirty men and they were very rough. I was alone amongst them.

I felt a shower of blows to my face and head. I was given the "telephone" technique and at the same time they pulled my hair extremely hard until they wounded my skull. The blows to the head and face continued all the time. There were other terrible things that I experienced.

While all this happened they made me strip naked time after time in the midst of obscenities and threats that they were going to "sort the matter out in another way." From time to time another group of torturers came back asking the same questions and beating me in the usual way."

She said that she was aware of the strong smell of alcohol on the breath of her captors and believed some of them were drunk. While held by the CNI, she was filmed under interrogation. She recounts how the filming took place.

"That film was part of a show. They were exasperated with me, I repeat exasperated and I never understood and I still don't understand why. Without anything on which to base it they decided to make up the "story of Pepe". I was under the effects of heavy sedatives for I was permanently in pain, and had a stiff neck which prevented me from even straightening it. But I was aware of what I was saying...."

After being held illegally in a CNI detention centre for one or more days she was transferred to an Investigaciones police station where "on orders from above" she was given a medical examination but not allowed to have an electroencephalogram and various X-rays which she reportedly needed.

"I couldn't open or close my mouth. All the movement in my jaw and ears was paralyzed. The stiffness in my spinal column and neck sent me into despair. I had a permanent headache and also the wounds to my skull, which were producing an ugly secretion, were very painful."

While held in the police station, she believed she was interrogated by the CNI who threatened her on three occasions.

After seven days, "I was taken [on 9 November] to the Military Prosecutor's Office by the members of the Tactical Operations Squad of Investigaciones. They took me hooded to an office where an angry official threatened that he would beat me if I didn't collaborate. I answered that I had nothing to say and waited for the blows. They took me out, walked me up and down and then back to the Military Prosecutor's Office, to see the Prosecutor, Carlos Donoso. I refused to make a statement unless they gave me a medical examination. Captain Donoso threatened to make use of the information from the CNI and that he would imprison my family and my lawyer Jose Galeano. I didn't make a statement that day. The next day the X-rays were taken and after 11 hours I made a statement. At 3.00am I was taken finally to prison. I didn't make another statement but I was taken every day to the Prosecutor's Office. They made me wait [for hours] in the van.



KARIN EITEL

Why? I never knew and I don't think anyone knew. I still felt very bad, with nausea and fatigue but they never did anything about it. "They're our orders." was the answer every time."

A video was shown later on television while she was still incommunicado in which she is seen confessing to having participated in the kidnapping of an army colonel still missing at the time but later released in Brazil, and also incriminating her lawyer. However, in her testimony given to the press later, Karin said, " Drawing conclusions, I think what they did was to insert questions, omit part of other questions and answers. It's true that I was in a very bad state but the video was not made the way they showed it....At no time did I implicate my lawyer in the incident of which I am accused." The effects of the torture were clearly visible in the video.

JUAN CANCINO ACEVEDO

"On 23 September 1987 I was arrested in a pharmacy by three men who identified themselves as CNI agents. They pointed their weapons at me, threw me to the floor, then put me blindfold into a van. They took me to an unidentified place (I presume it was a CNI detention centre). There they began to torture me. After stripping me from the waist upwards they made me lie on a bedframe. They applied electric shocks all over my body. Someone who was apparently a doctor gave me a quick examination, then asked me what illnesses I had or had had. After that they stripped me completely and continued applying electric shocks. Then they took me from there to another room, also closed. Still naked, I was given electric shocks of greater intensity than before and they beat me in different parts of the body.

After tying my wrists to my legs they suspended me from a pole, applied electric shocks and beat me. They threatened my family, that they were going to kill them, that they were going to arrest them, that my sister Patricia and my mother would be treated especially badly.

When they took me down I couldn't feel my arms or my feet. My wrists, knees and shins were in a complete mess. Afterwards I was allowed to rest. Then they again gave me electric shocks but this time using two machines. They interrogated me about the kidnapping of Colonel Carreño. Afterwards they took me to the 12 Comisaria, a police station run by Investigaciones. This was on the Friday or Saturday. A doctor examined me. They handcuffed me to a chair and that's how I had to spend the night. The next day they took me back to the CNI detention centre. The interrogation continued, accompanied of course by blows. In the evening I was taken back to the Investigaciones police station. On the Monday they [the CNI agents] again took me from the police station to some part of Santiago. Until the Friday, I spent the nights in the police station and during the day I was taken to what I assume was a CNI detention centre. On the Friday, in the CNI detention centre, I was again tortured with electric shocks and they tried to hypnotize me. On the Saturday, the CNI came to

look for me at the police station but the chief refused to let them take me."

On the Monday he was taken to the Carcel Publica, a prison, and in the afternoon back to the police station where he was interrogated by a military prosecutor. Taken back to prison, the incommunicado detention order was lifted on 8 November. He has been charged under the Anti-terrorist Law.

HUGO REINALDO NECULEO MONTUPIL, 23, tradesman

"Approximately two months before I was arrested, I noticed on numerous occasions as I went about my work that I was being followed by men in plainclothes but I didn't pay much attention...until 13 October. That day, a Tuesday, at about 20.00h on the way home from work, two individuals in plainclothes came up to me and put two pistols to my head, telling me not to move. Thinking that I was about to be attacked I tried to run away but it was impossible because more men (between 8 and 10) appeared, surrounded me and forcibly arrested me. As there was no possibility of escaping I began to ask them what they wanted, to which they replied that I should know why. So I began to struggle, and asked them to identify themselves but they didn't. After this they forced me into a car and made me bend my head. They began to punch me and beat me with blunt objects, interrogating me about weapons, to which I responded that I knew nothing.Then they covered my head with a jacket and took me to a site where there were big buildings, something like a factory - I deduced this from the sound of industrial machinery there and the echo it made. There they blindfolded me and stripped me. They began questioning me and beating me. When they saw that I didn't have any answers they hung me up from the forearms and beat me even harder with a kind of leather strap. They also forced my head into something full of foulsmelling liquid, which was apparently excrement. They kept my head under until I began to swallow the liquid and practically drowned because of the lack of air. They also gave me electric shocks. The thing that most caught my attention was that this was being done by a woman who apparently enjoyed my reactions of pain as she said things to me and kept laughing. That is what happened in general terms, among other things which are very unpleasant to remember, during the night and morning I was held by these individuals. After I had been taken blindfolded to an Investigaciones police station, I discovered that they were members of the CNI. There they proceeded to take a statement. The treatment completely changed."

The following day, he was transferred to prison where he was held incommunicado until 17 October. Then prison guards came saying they were taking him back to the prosecutor's office (where he had appeared a few days earlier) but instead "I was handed over again to the men who tortured me. They held me all day, interrogating and torturing me. That day I was taken back to prison at about 22.30 and remained incommunicado for three more days."

Hugo Neculeo is currently in the Santiago Penitentiary on charges under the Arms Control Law.

RICARDO BRAVO MEYER, 32, married to Belgian Rita Ceuppens who was also arrested and later expelled.

"I was arrested on 22 October at 09.40h after a shoot-out with police..I fell to the floor as a result of a bullet passing through my left knee and a bullet lodged in my right buttock. From this position I shouted my name out twice to the numerous witnesses who were in the area. A large contingent of police arrived. They tied my hands behind my back and took me away from the potential witnesses (construction workers and people at a bus stop. They made me lie face down and proceeded to kick me in the face over and over again, causing a series of fractures to the bones in my face. (I discovered afterwards from the X rays taken that they were serious.) I was thrown into a police van where members of GOPE (a special police branch) took over, kicking and punching me in various parts of the body, hitting me with the butts of their weapons, beating me simultaneously on both ears, and strangling me with their hands and a belt until I almost suffocated. They pressed the barrel of a gun in the soft part below my jaw to make it difficult to breathe. At the same time they questioned me. Had I been alone, where was I coming from, if I was going to attack the petrol station there on the corner etc.

As a result of the blows and the blood coming from my nose, mouth and the cuts on my face they stopped beating me and someone came and photographed the least beaten side of my face. I must have lost consciousness then because the next thing I remember is being woken up by the pain when I was literally thrown onto a stretcher at the Hospital Sotero del Rio, where two civilian agents came to interrogate me. Later they put some stitches in my face and took some X rays and I was taken to the intensive care unit where I was handcuffed to the bed and kept under police guard."

Ricardo Bravo was held incommunicado in hospital at least nineteen days after his arrest and remained in intensive care for some time. He has been charged under the Arms Control Law and is currently being held in the Santiago Penitentiary.

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CHILE ACTION NETWORK: CHAN 02/88

SECRET DETENTION CENTRES STILL IN OPERATION

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Please ensure that all relevant people in the section have received copies for their attention, and that the document is centrally filed for future reference. In addition please undertake as many of the following recommended actions as possible.

1. CHAN groups should send no more than one or two well-worded letters to the Chilean Embassy in their country expressing concern about the continuing use of torture, and dismay at reports that his country appears not to be fulfilling its commitment to the provisions of the international and regional conventions against torture which it signed last year. Note that steps were taken which should have increased protection for detainees but that they appear to have been insufficient and resulted in a renewal of the practice of using secret detention centres. Urge that further more rigorous measures be taken to ensure that torture is eradicated and that allegations that secret detention centres are in operation be fully investigated. Politely ask for information about the outcome of any investigations that may be currently underway.

Send copies of your letters to the Comisión Nacional contra la Tortura: Catedral 1063, piso 2, Santiago.

2. Once you have written the letter(s) you should use the rest of your groups' resources for disseminating the external part of this document: to journalists, your local church and religious groups and any other contacts you may have who may be interested or willing to participate in the action. Check with the International Secretariat or your CHAN coordinator if you want to continue this action after 31 August 1988.

3. Sections/Chile-CHAN coordination groups may also submit this to their government to keep them informed of Amnesty International's concerns.

