

Network of Concerned Historians				NCH
Campaigns				
Year original	Year follow-up	Circular	Country	Names
2005		41	Peru	Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania, archeologist, a.o.

Announcement

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) reports about recent death threats against members of a Peruvian forensic team, including archaeologist Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania. These teams excavate mass graves with evidence of past atrocities and are therefore of great concern to historians. Human- rights abuses were committed by the state and by armed opposition groups between May 1980 and November 2000. We hope that you can send the recommended urgent appeals immediately. Please remember to write in your professional capacity. Thank you.

PS: For previous items on Peruvian forensic anthropology, see NCH #27, 37 (Annual Reports of 2002, 2004).

For related Peruvian items, see NCH #23, 27, 32, 37, 38 (Annual Reports of 2001-2005).

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE (AAAS) HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION NETWORK

FORENSIC TEAM THREATENED IN PERU

18 October 2005

Case number: pe0514_for

Issues: Academic and scientific freedom; harassment or intimidation

FACTS OF THE CASE:

Over the past few months, three Peruvian forensics experts - Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania (archaeologist), Carlos Alberto Suarez Canlla (odontologist), and Máximo Angel Banda Roca (anthropologist) - have received death threats. The three work for the Medical Legal Institute in

Ayacucho where they identify remains of those killed during Peru's internal conflict. The Shining Path, a Maoist rebel group in Peru, was founded in Ayacucho. Several human rights violations and extrajudicial killings on the part of both the Shining Path and the Peruvian government's antiterrorist campaign occurred in Ayacucho.

The first threats occurred on 28 February 2005, while Rueda Curimania, Suarez Canlla, and Banda Roca were conducting exhumations at the Cuartel Domingo Ayarza (Ex-Cuartel Los Cabitos, No. 51) military base, in Ayacucho. The second set of threats occurred on 9 and 11 August, as the team was analyzing the human remains and associated evidence recovered from the military base. The threats, received by text message to their cell phones, demanded that the team stop working on this case or they will be killed. One message to Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania read: "piece of s---, stop the excavations or you will die, the same goes for Carlos and Máximo."

The team members did not previously file an official deposition with the government because they were worried that if government officials then failed to protect them, it could leave them even more vulnerable. However, after the most recent death threats they decided that it is necessary for their supervisors and Peruvian officials to be informed about this danger so that the team may be protected.

Official forensics experts and other non-governmental forensics teams, such as the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) and the Andean Center for Forensic Anthropology Research (CENIA), have been conducting investigations into human rights and humanitarian law cases for the past three years in the face of many obstacles. As a result, it is particularly critical that these death threats be stopped now to allow Peruvian experts - both officials and non-governmental - to conduct future investigations without danger to their lives and without pressures that could affect their scientific work.

(Source of information for this case is personal correspondence with the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team.)

RELEVANT HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS:

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:

Article 15 (3): The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to respect the freedom indispensable for scientific research and creative activity.

The Human Rights Defenders Declaration:

Article 15 (3): The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to respect the freedom indispensable for scientific research and creative activity.

Article 11: Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to the lawful exercise of his or her occupation or profession.

Article 12(2): The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights].

Article 6(c): Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others: To study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and, through these and other appropriate means, to draw public attention to those matters.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Please send faxes, letters, or emails:

Requesting that the government provide the scientists and other staff of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology team with police protection; and

Asking officials to investigate threats against the individuals concerned and to hold those responsible for making death accountable.

APPEAL AND INQUIRY MESSAGES SHOULD BE SENT TO:

Dr. Alfonso Ricardo Cornejo Alpaca

Fiscal Superior Decano Del Distrito Judicial De Ayacucho

Jr. Libertad Quinta Cuadra S/N Ministerio Publico Huamanga - Ayacucho Peru

Fax: 066-311920

Salutation: Dear Doctor Cornejo Alpaca

Dr. Luis August Bromley Coloma

Jefe Nacional Del Instituto De Medicina Legal Del Peru

Av. Abancay S/N - Quinta Cuadra Ministerio Publico Lima, Peru

Salutation: Dear Doctor Bromley Coloma

Cristina Del Pilar Olazabal Ochoa

Fiscal de la Fiscalia Penal Supraprovincial Con Competencia en Delitos Contra el Terrorismo y Lesa

H

J. Libertad Quinta Cuadra S/N Ministerio Publico Huamanga - Ayacucho Peru

Fax: 066-311920

Salutation: Dear Madame

COPIES SENT TO:

His Excellency Eduardo Ferrero Costa

Ambassador of Peru

1700 Massachusetts Ave, NW Washington, DC 20036

Fax: 202-659-8124

Salutation: Dear Mr. Ambassador

Please send copies of your appeals, and any responses you may receive, or direct any questions you may have to Sarah Olmstead, AAAS Science and Human Rights Program, 1200 New York Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20005; tel. 202-326-6787; email shrp@aaas.org; or fax 202-289-4950.

The keys to effective appeals are to be courteous and respectful, accurate and precise, impartial in approach, and as specific as possible regarding the alleged violation and the international human rights standards and instruments that apply to the situation. Reference to your scientific organization and professional affiliation is always helpful.

To ensure that appeals are current and credible, please do not continue to write appeals on this case after 90 days from the date of the posting unless an update has been issued.