

amnesty international

CHILE

THE KILLING OF JECAR NEGhme

ORIGINAL

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Jecar Neghme, 29, leader of a political faction of the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR - Movement of the Revolutionary Left), married with a 7-year-old child. His father was executed shortly after the military coup in 1973.

Amnesty International has received reports that Jecar Neghme, spokesperson of the MIR and vice-president of the Izquierda Unida (IU, United Left - a coalition of left-wing parties) was shot dead on the night of 4 September shortly after leaving his party headquarters. He is the first political leader to be killed since the mid-1970's.

Initial reports suggest that Jecar Neghme died as a result of 12 bullets fired by unidentified individuals from an unmarked car. Two groups have claimed responsibility for his death, one calling itself Camisas Negras (Blackshirts), the other, the Comando 11 de Septiembre (11 September Commando). The Comando 11 de Septiembre reportedly told a radio station that Neghme had been killed to avenge the killing of members of the security forces. The Commando has claimed responsibility in the past for the killing of four left-wing political activists shortly after the imposition of a state of siege in September 1986. Antonio Román, a MIR candidate in the forthcoming congressional elections, said later that he himself had been followed after he left the headquarters shortly before Jecar. Jecar Neghme had also apparently reported two days earlier that he was being followed by two cars. Lawyers have submitted a complaint of homicide to the 4 Criminal Court and a special investigating judge (ministro en visita), Carlos Meneses Pizarro was appointed to the case on 6 September.

Although it is not yet clear who is responsible for the killing, Amnesty International fears that it may indicate a resurgence in the activities of clandestine groups believed to have links with the security forces. The organization has repeatedly expressed its concern to the authorities about the groups' activities, whose methods have included death threats, abductions, torture and, in a few instances, killings. In a few cases, evidence has emerged in the courts that members of the security forces were involved in these groups but no one has ever been convicted. Although in 1989 the number of abductions has decreased, government critics have continued to receive death threats, among them Jecar's fellow party member Patricio Rivas and communist party member Patricio Hales, both of

whom say they have received death threats by telephone over the last few days in the name of the Comando 11 de septiembre.

JAI
Jecar Neghme was a leader of a faction of the MIR which abandoned the armed struggle in favour of bringing about change through the electoral process. Shortly before he was killed, the branch of the party over which he presided announced their support for opposition presidential candidate, Patricio Aylwin. Presidential and congressional elections are due to take place in Chile on 14 December.

The killing has been widely condemned in Chile, including by all three presidential candidates. Mr. Aylwin, speaking shortly after Mr. Neghme's death said, "There are sectors attempting to impede a normal electoral process and the authorities owe an explanation to the country in this localised case." The government however have claimed that his death was due to in-fighting between different branches of the MIR.

Jecar Neghme



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COUNTRY: CHILE
SUBJECT TITLE: THE KILLING OF JECAR NEGHME

CHAN 04/89

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.

Please note that this action was telexed to the following sections on 7 September for immediate transmission to CHAN/Chile Coordinators: France, FRG, Netherlands, Sweden, USA, Canada A.

1. CHAN groups in other sections should send one appeal only:

-- welcoming the appointment of a special investigating judge and calling for a full and speedy investigation to clarify the circumstances surrounding the death of Jecar Neghme and the identification of those responsible;

-- expressing concern that in the past, killings of government opponents have remained with impunity.

ADDRESSES FOR APPEALS TO:

Sr. Carlos Cáceres (Minister of the Interior)
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Palacio de La Moneda
Santiago, Chile

Sr. Hernán Errázuriz (Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Palacio de La Moneda
Santiago, Chile

COPIES TO:

Sres.
CODEPU
Bandera 465
Santiago, Chile

and to Chilean diplomatic representatives in your country.

2. No publicity is requested at the moment. However, you can use the information to reply to any queries about the case.

DISTRIBUTION BY THE IS

This circular has been sent direct by the IS to: Sections and Chile/CHAN coordinators/coordination groups.

