

Exmo Dr. Mauricio CORREIA  
Sr. Ministro da Justiça  
Ministerio da Justiça  
Esplanada dos Ministerios, Bloco 23  
70.064 Brasilia, DF, BRAZIL

February 1, 1993

RE: Antonio GILVAN DA CRUZ

Your Excellency:

As a member of Amnesty International, I am writing to express concern for the torture and killing of Antonio Gilvan de Cruz, of the Truka Indigenous Area on the island of Nossa Senhora da Assunção, Cabrobo, Pernambuco on 28 November 1990. That morning, a group of eight armed men in civilian clothes, claiming to be federal police officers, arrived at the family's house. When they were denied entrance, they opened fire, forced their way into the house, tied up Antonio and took him away. The gunmen also took away all of the family's papers relating to their ownership of land.

That was the last time Antonio Gilvan da Cruz's family saw him alive. His body was found dumped by a roadside a few hours later. He had been savagely mutilated: castrated, burned with cigarettes, his teeth and fingernails pulled out and an arm and a leg broken. He also had been shot in the chest. He was only 22 years old.

The effect of the killing was to terrorize the Truka community. Fears for their leaders grew following rumors that a "death list" was circulating. The Regional Superintendent of Federal Police in Recife is reported to have said that the landowner suspected by the community of commissioning the killing

-2-

is known to have returned to the area, but that the man is too violent and dangerous for the police to attempt to arrest him.

Failure to apprehend the attackers and bring them to trial stimulates a climate of impunity for attacks against members of indigenous groups. This climate of impunity puts whole indigenous communities at risk. I am aware of and admire the provisions of the Brazilian Constitution which offer indigenous peoples added protection. I hope that by your actions these guarantees are truly enjoyed by the Truka and other indigenous peoples. I also respectfully urge that you make it absolutely clear that the authorities will not tolerate any form of torture of any member of the population be they indigenous or not, and that those found responsible will feel the full force of the law.

Very truly yours,

*Maria Walsh*

MARIA WALSH

Copy:

Centro Ecumenico de Documentação  
e Informação (CEDI)  
Avenida Higienopolis 983  
05517 São Paulo SP  
BRAZIL