

**URGENT
ACTION**

**amnesty
international**

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International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England

Amnesty International opposes by all appropriate means the imposition and infliction of death penalties and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of prisoners or other detained or general distribution of arms whether or not they have used or advocated violence.
(Amnesty International Statute, Article 1(c))

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Torture/Health concern

23 February 1982

WOMEN: Elisa Lucia MICHELINI DELLEPIANI
Brenda SOSA
Edith CASTILLO

Paula LABORDE
Sonia RIZZO
Rosario PEGUITO

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The six women above are held in Punta de Rieles prison in Montevideo for various terms of imprisonment for their opposition to the present Uruguayan government. According to reports received by AI, they are all now in solitary confinement and are not allowed to receive visits from relatives.

The reports say that, on or around 11 February 1982, Elisa Michelini, Brenda Sosa and Edith Castillo were attacked in their cells by a group of prison officials led by a man called Centurión. They were beaten with sticks and then taken to solitary confinement. The reports add that Paula Laborde, Sonia Rizzo and Rosario Peguito were then asked to testify that the first three women had provoked the intervention by attacking the guards. All three refused and were also punished by solitary confinement, although they are not reported to have been beaten. However, AI fears that any, or all, of the six women may be subjected to further ill-treatment and extension of solitary confinement and of the ban on visits.

Women held at Punta de Rieles prison are often punished for imaginary or provoked contraventions of prison regulations by beating and confinement to punishment cells, where conditions are even harsher than in "normal" cells, entailing almost complete darkness, scant access of air, lack of blankets, absence of exercise and poor food. Most women detained at Punta de Rieles suffer from illnesses aggravated or caused by their conditions of imprisonment.

Of the six women, the best-known is Elisa Michelini, daughter of Senator Zelmar Michelini, who had denounced torture in Uruguay's jails in 1972 and 1973. He emigrated to Argentina and after having testified to the Russell human rights tribunal, was assassinated in Buenos Aires on 20 May 1976. Elisa's sister, Margarita, was kidnapped in Argentina, taken to Uruguay and spent 4½ years in prison. Elisa was arrested in 1972 and served an eight-year sentence but was re-tried in secret and sentenced to a further 18 years' imprisonment. She was reportedly taken from her cell and tortured at the time of her father's assassination.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Telegrams/airmail letters requested that Elisa Michelini, Brenda Sosa, Edith Castillo, Paula Laborde, Sonia Rizzo and Rosario Peguito be returned from solitary confinement to their previous cells and be allowed to receive regular family visits. Please express concern about the continuous allegations of ill-treatment in Punta de Rieles prison and request that the women receive any necessary medical