Subject: Safety of Carmelia Pereira dos Santos and Luis Ferrari

Las Cruces, USA, May 1st, 2003,

Exmo. Sr Secretário,

I am deeply concerned by the threat to the safety of Ms. Carmelia Pereira dos Santos and Father Luis Ferrari, in Andaraí, Bahia. Ms. Pereira dos Santos has received threatening phone calls at home, while someone told Mr. Luis Ferrari on the phone as well, "Vamos te matar, como matamos aquele negro". Ms. Carmelia Pereira dos Santos and Mr. Luis Ferrari have both denounced the alleged torture and death in custody of Nivaldo Brandão de Oliveira in Andaraí police station. I call on you to assure Ms. Carmelia Pereira dos Santos and Mr. Luis Ferrari’s safety, according to their wishes.

It is also crucial that your administration conduct full, prompt and impartial investigations into these death threats, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice, so that this does not happen again. It is particularly disturbing that these threats seem connected to the torture and death of Mr. Nivaldo Brandão de Oliveira, who was found dead in Andaraí police station on 16 February 2003.

Regarding this latter case, I demand that you do everything in your power to assure a full, prompt and impartial investigations into his death, and that those responsible be brought to justice, under Brazil’s law against torture, No. 9455 of 7 April 1997. Meanwhile, any police officers suspected of committing acts of torture against him should be suspended, pending the completion of investigations.

Thanking you in advance for your time on this important and urgent matter, I am respectfully,