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File Number(s): Petition 11.666
Title/Style of Cause: 255 Minors v. Paraguay
Doc. Type: Decision on Precautionary Measures
Dated: 8 August 2001
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OEA/Ser./L/V/II.114, doc. 5 rev., Ch. III, para. 48 (2001)

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48. On August 8, 2001, the Commission requested that precautionary measures be adopted on behalf of the 255 minors who were previously being held at the Panchito López Reeducation Center for Minors (petition 11.666). The Commission made this request because on July 25, 2001, a fire had broken out at the Panchito López Institute. One youngster, Benito Augusto Moreno, was shot by a guard during the fire and died on August 6, 2001; following the fire, 125 minors were transferred to the Emboscada facility, which does not meet the minimum standards needed to guarantee the physical integrity of the minor inmates; the others were sent to different parts of the country and were placed in prisons with small, overcrowded cells alongside adults, except at the San Juan Bautista and Emboscada facilities, where they were placed in separate children's blocks; and relocating these minors to distant prisons has aggravated their critical situations and has also made family visits impossible. The Commission therefore requested that: (1) The minors be immediately transferred to the Itaguá Education Center. (2) The physical, mental, and moral integrity of the minors be ensured and, in particular, that minors and adults be kept completely separate during the temporary relocation of the young inmates in the aforesaid facilities. (3) Access to the minors by their legal counsel and family visitors be granted. (4) The circumstances that gave rise to these measures be investigated, in particular those that led to the death of Benito Augusto Moreno (or Augusto Benitez), and that the perpetrators thereof be punished. After the State replied, the parties have continued to submit information and comments in connection with these precautionary measures. The Commission continues to monitor compliance with the precautionary measures.