

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 14/93 Attempted extrajudicial execution/
Fear for safety

18 January 1993

COLOMBIA: Rafael DUARTE ORTIZ, parish priest

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Father Rafael Duarte Ortiz who has survived an attempt on his life. The attack was reportedly carried out by members of the police on 8 January 1993.

According to reports received by Amnesty International, Father Rafael Duarte Ortiz, parish priest of Carcasí, department of Santander in Colombia's Magdalena Medio region, was fired at by two members of the Colombian national police at 7 pm during an electrical blackout. The shots missed and Father Rafael Duarte managed to escape. The parish priest sought refuge in a nearby house for several hours while police agents and other armed men working with them reportedly remained in Carcasí. Father Rafael Duarte had recently denounced human rights violations in Carcasí by members of the Colombian armed forces.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The largely rural area of the Magdalena Medio in central Colombia has been a focus of political violence for several years following the emergence of guerrilla groups in the 1960s and subsequent militarization of the region during the 1980s. Human rights abuses have escalated in the region, including enforced recruitment, torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance" committed by the Colombian army, police and paramilitary organizations working with them, against members of the civilian population perceived as potential guerrilla collaborators. People working in defence of human rights have increasingly become targets.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Spanish, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Father Rafael Duarte Ortiz, particularly in view of the attempt on his life on 8 January 1993 by members of the Colombian national police;
- urging that Father Rafael Duarte Ortiz be given all the necessary guarantees to carry out his parochial duties in safety, including his humanitarian work;
- urging for an immediate, independent inquiry into the attack on Father Rafael Duarte Ortiz' life in order to bring those responsible to justice, the results of which should be made public.

APPEALS TO

1) Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla
Procurador General de la Nación
Procuraduría General
Edificio Banco Ganadero
Carrera 5, No. 15-80
Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO or 41213 PGNDP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472

Salutation: Sr. Procurador de la Nación / Dear Dr. Arrieta

2) Director General of the Police:

Mayor General Miguel Antonio Gómez Padilla
Director General de la Policía Nacional
Tr. 45 No. 40-11
Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Director General Policía, Bogotá, Colombia

Salutation: Sr. Mayor General / Dear Major General

3) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7324, + 57 1 287 7937

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President Gaviria

4) Minister of Defence:

Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda
Ministro de Defensa Nacional
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa Pardo Rueda, Santa Fe de Bogota, Colombia

Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO

Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights Organization:

Comisión Intercongregacional de
Justicia y Paz
A.A. 52332
Santa Fé de Bogotá
Colombia

Director of Public Prosecutions:

Dr. Gustavo de Grieff
Fiscal General del Estado
Fiscalía General del Estado
Calle 35, No. 4-31
Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes: + 57 1 287 0939

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 March 1993.