

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/006/2005

04 April 2005

Further Information on UA 78/05 (AMR 23/005/2005, 1 April 2005) Fear for safety/ Death Threats New Concern: Abduction

COLOMBIA Danilo Rueda (m)  
Other members of the non-governmental human rights organization *Comisión Intereclesial Justicia y Paz*, Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission including:

New Names: Enrique Chimonja (m)  
Edwin Mosquera (m)  
Johana López (f)  
Mónica Suarez (f)  
Fabio Ariza (f)

---

Five of the human rights activists named above, who work for the Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission (*Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz*) were reportedly abducted at 7:00am on 31 March by armed gunmen who allegedly identified themselves as members of the guerrilla group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC*).

Enrique Chimonja, Edwin Mosquera, Johana López, Mónica Suárez and Fabio Ariza were reportedly abducted from the hamlets of Pueblo Nuevo and Bella Flor Remacho in the Jiguiamiandó River Basin, department of Chocó. They were working with Afro-descendent communities living in this area and the neighbouring Curvaradó River Basin. These communities have attempted to assert their right as civilians not to be drawn into the conflict between left-wing guerrillas and government security forces backed by paramilitaries, by insisting that armed groups remain outside the areas where they live which they have declared "humanitarian refuge zones", ("*zonas humanitarias de refugio*"). The communities have in recent years faced repeated death threats and have been victim to human rights violations committed by army-backed paramilitary forces operating in the area, despite the heavy presence of the security forces in areas which give access to these river basins. In February, Amnesty International received information that paramilitaries had entered the Jiguiamiandó territory and set up camp opposite the community of Pueblo Nuevo.

The abductions have taken place days after *Justicia y Paz* received a written death threat labelling its members as guerrillas, and days after statements made by high-ranking government officials which in effect call into question the legitimacy of the stance taken by these civilian communities to remain outside the conflict. They also come in the wake of repeated accusations by members of the XVII Brigade of the Colombian Army that the *Justicia y Paz* activists operating in the region are guerrilla collaborators. On 26 March, witnesses reported seeing four truck-loads of army-backed paramilitaries leaving the municipality of Belén de Bajirá in the direction of the Jiguiamiandó River Basin. The route taken reportedly took the paramilitaries past a XVII Brigade army post. The soldiers reportedly withdrew from this post shortly before the paramilitaries travelled passed. For these reasons there is serious concern that those responsible for the abductions could be army-backed paramilitaries.

The abductions have also taken place days after *Justicia y Paz* had intervened in a hearing of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of the Organization of American States by calling for the safety of the Jiguiamiandó and Curvaradó communities. The organization lodged a complaint that indigenous, Afro-descendent and peasant farmer communities were being driven off their land by the actions of the army and their paramilitary allies in the communities of Curvaradó and Jiguiamiandó. On 15 March 2005 the Inter-

American Court of Human Rights had ruled that the Colombian State should take action to guarantee the safety of the "humanitarian refuge zones".

On 2 April, a delegation including members of *Justicia y Paz* and other national and international human rights organizations travelled to the area to establish what has happened to the five human rights activists.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Enrique Chimonja, Edwin Mosquera, Johana López, Mónica Suárez and Fabio Ariza who work for the Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission (*Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz*) and who were reportedly abducted at 7:00am on 31 March 2005 from the hamlets of Pueblo Nuevo and Bella Flor Remacho in the Jiguiamiandó River Basin;
- calling on the authorities to establish whether guerrilla forces or army-backed paramilitaries are responsible for the abductions and to bring those responsible to justice;
- calling for all measures, deemed appropriate by *Justicia y Paz* and the communities of Jiguiamiandó and Curvaradó, to be taken to guarantee their safety;
- calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of the "humanitarian refuge zones" in line with the ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on 15 March 2005 which calls for special protection measures for these zones and for the Jiguiamiandó and Curvaradó communities to be consulted on the implementation and planning of measures to guarantee their safety.

**APPEALS TO:**

President

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez

Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-2, Bogotá, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 1 337 5890/342 0592**

**Salutation: Excmo. Sr. Presidente Uribe /Dear President Uribe**

Vice-President

Vicepresidente de la República de Colombia

Dr. Francisco Santos Calderón

Vicepresidencia, Carrera 8A No 5-57, Bogotá, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 1 565 7682**

**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Vicepresidente/ Dear Vice-President**

Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio

Fiscal General de la Nación, Fiscalía General de la Nación,

Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite), Bogotá, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 1 570 2000 (you will hear a message in Spanish asking you to enter extension 2017)**

**Salutation: Estimado Dr. Osorio /Dear Dr. Osorio**

**COPIES TO:**

Non-governmental human rights organization

Comisión Intereclesial Justicia y Paz

Calle 50 No13-19 Oficina 203

Bogotá

Colombia

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 16 May 2005.