

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 23/07/92  
Distr: UA/SC

UA 44/92 Fear of "Disappearance"

7 February 1992

COLOMBIA	Gustavo LOPEZ PINEDA	35
	Imelda GONZALEZ GUERRERO (female)	36

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Gustavo López Pineda and his wife Imelda González Guerrero, who have not been seen since 1 February 1992, when they were reportedly detained by a military patrol in the community of El Zarzal, close to the town of Barrancabermeja, Santander department.

According to information received by Amnesty International, Gustavo López and Imelda González were travelling by motorcycle when they were detained and their motorcycle was found abandoned close to the point of detention. The day after, their daughter went to the military base to ask after them, but their detention was denied and the soldiers were reportedly unwilling to talk to her. The local personero (ombudsman) to whom the detention was denounced, also reportedly made enquiries at the base about the whereabouts of the couple, but without success. There is serious concern for their safety as the whereabouts of Gustavo López Pineda and Imelda González Guerrero remain unknown.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** [note for translators: please see UA 40/92]

In September 1991 the Procurator General's office produced an official report which stated that more than 3,000 complaints had been lodged against the army and police in the last two years for human rights violations. President César Gaviria Trujillo, on presenting the report, stated:

***"No puede el Gobierno desconocer la gravedad de las acusaciones que se hacen en forma reiterada y masiva contra sus agentes, ni ignorar hasta que punto reina la impunidad por violación de derechos humanos."***

***"The government cannot fail to recognise the seriousness of the accusations made constantly and on a massive scale against its agents, nor ignore the extent of impunity in cases of human rights violations".***

However, despite the government's declared commitment to uphold respect for human rights, members of the Colombian armed and security forces and paramilitary groups associated with them have continued to commit serious abuses, including torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance", with virtual impunity.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Gustavo López Pineda and Imelda González Guerrero, who have not been seen since their reported detention by a military patrol on 1 February 1992;

- requesting an immediate and thorough investigation into their whereabouts;
- urging that they be released unless charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- urging that whilst in detention they be treated humanely and provided with full access to lawyers and relatives.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) President of the Republic:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño, Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Presidente Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 283 3066, + 57 1 286 7324, + 57 1 287**

**7937**

**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President**

**Gaviria**

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2) Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla

Procurador General de la Nación

Procuraduría General

Edificio Banco Ganadero

Carrera 5, No. 15-80, Santa Fe 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 General de la Nación / Dear Dr**

**Arrieta**

3) Advocate for the People:

Dr. Jaime Córdoba Triviño

Defensor del Pueblo

Procuraduría General

Edificio Banco Ganadero

Carrera 5, No. 15-80, Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Defensor del Pueblo Triviño, c/o Procuraduría General, Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 41224 PREGN CO or 41213 pgndp CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472**

**Salutation: Estimado Dr Triviño / Dear Dr Triviño**

4) Minister of Defence:

Dr Rafael Pardo Rueda

Ministro De Defensa Nacional

Ministerio de Defensa Nacional

Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52

Santa Fe de Bogotá , Colombia

**Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

**Salutation: Sr Ministro / Dear Minister**

5) Commander of the Nueva Granada Battalion:

Comandante Victor Manuel Bernal Caicedo

Batallón de Artillería Nueva Granada

Calle 12

Pueblo Nuevo

Barrancabermeja

Santander

COLOMBIA

**Telegrams: Commander Batallón de Artillería Nueva Granada, Santander, Colombia**

**Salutation: Sr. Comandante / Dear Commander**

**COPIES TO:**

Lawyers Organization:

Comisión Andina de Juristas

Seccional Colombiana

AA 58533

Santa Fe de Bogotá

Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 March 1992.