

PUBLIC

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UA 42/03 Fear of Safety

11 February 2003

COLOMBIA Danilo Rueda (m)

**Members of the non-governmental human rights organization *Comisión Intereclesial Justicia y Paz*, Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission**

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On 2 February 2003, members of the non-governmental human rights organization, *Comisión Intereclesial Justicia y Paz*, (Justice and Peace) received a telephoned death threat. A written death threat was sent in November 2002 to human rights defender, Danilo Rueda. The threats reportedly come from army-backed paramilitaries.

According to information received, on 2 February 2003 at 8:20pm an anonymous telephone caller threatened members of Justice and Peace: "*Muerte a los guerrilleros de derechos, ya se lo dijimos*", "Death to (human) rights guerrillas, we have already warned you".

The telephoned death threat follows reports that the offices of Justice and Peace in Bogotá were kept under surveillance by unidentified gunmen between 15 and 20 December. On 25 November 2002 a written death threat was received addressed to Carlos Julio Roza a priest working for Justice and Peace. The message in the envelope was addressed to Danilo Rueda, a human rights defender with Justice and Peace and read "*Danilo Rueda QEPD. ANTICOMUNISTAS DE COLOMBIA CONTRA AUXILIARES DE LA GUERRILLA*", "Danilo Rueda RIP. ANTICOMMUNISTS OF COLOMBIA AGAINST GUERRILLA AUXILIARIES

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Justice and Peace campaign against human rights violations committed by the security forces and their paramilitary allies against civilian communities in conflict regions in Colombia. They have frequently been accused of being subversive by the security forces and their paramilitary allies who have a policy of labelling human rights organizations as guerrilla collaborators or supporters, so they can present them as legitimate targets in the counter-insurgency war. These accusations are frequently followed by serious human rights violations committed by paramilitaries. Over 25 human rights defenders have been killed or "disappeared" in the last four years.

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

- expressing concern at the increasingly serious continuation of death threats sent to Danilo Rueda and Justice and Peace;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation, into the threats against the members of Justice and Peace, in consultation with the organisation, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- asking them to take immediate and effective action to ensure that members of Justice and Peace can carry out their legitimate and important work for the defence of human rights in safety;
- reminding the authorities of their obligations to human rights defenders, as laid out in the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Organization of American States Human Rights Defenders in the Americas resolution and in repeated recommendations made to them by the UN;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and UN recommendations.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Velez

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño

Carrera 8 No.7-26

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegram:** **Presidente de la República, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax:** **+ 57 1 342 0592**

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

Vice-President of the Republic of Colombia

Vicepresidente de la República de Colombia

Dr. Francisco Santos Calderón

Vicepresidencia

Carrera 8A No 5-57

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegram:** **Vice-Presidente Bell, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax:** **+ 57 1 334 1138**

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

Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio,

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

Apartado Aereo 29855, Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite),

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegram:** **Fiscal General, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax:** **+ 57 1 570 2022/2003 (if someone answers say ame da tono de fax por favor@)**

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

**COPIES TO:**

Non-governmental human rights organization

AA1029

Santafé de Bogotá

Colombia

National Advocate for the people

Sr. Eduardo Cifuentes Muñoz,

Defensor del Pueblo, Defensoría del Pueblo,

Calle 55, No. 10-32/46 office 301,

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegram:** **National Advocate, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax:** **+ 57 1 640 0491**

**Salutation:** **Dear Mr. Cifuentes Muñoz / Estimado Sr. Cifuentes Muñoz**

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 25 March 2003.