

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 182/94 (AMR 23/37/94, 6 MAY 1994) - Arbitrary Detention / Torture / Fear for Safety

COLOMBIA Carlos ALBERTO RUIZ, human rights legal worker
 Luis Téllez, civic activist
 Ayda Martínez Nieto (f), popular activist

and other human rights workers

On 29 July 1994, Carlos Alberto Ruiz received a telephoned death threat at home against himself and his family in which he was informed that "he would have to pay for his work" ("*debía dar cuentas por su trabajo*").

Carlos Alberto Ruiz is a researcher with the Latin American Institute for Alternative Legal Services, *Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales Alternativos*, (ILSA) which provides legal advice and support for civilians internally displaced by the political violence in Colombia.

On 1 May 1994, following a march in Bogotá organized by human rights organizations, Luis Téllez and Ayda Martínez Nieto were arbitrarily detained and tortured by agents of the Judicial and Investigative police, *Sección de Policía Judicial y de Investigación (SIJIN)*. Whilst under torture, Luis Téllez named Carlos Alberto Ruiz as the person who had handed him some leaflets to distribute during the march. On 2 May Carlos Alberto Ruiz was reportedly followed by three men and the ILSA offices and another human rights organization's offices were kept under surveillance.

Carlos Alberto Ruiz then met with the Commissioner for the Police, *Comisionado para la Policía*, to denounce the torture and other related concerns. Following this meeting, Carlos Alberto was notified that investigations into the allegations of the torture of Luis Téllez had been initiated.

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Carlos Alberto Ruiz following the death threats against him, given that in recent years human rights activists have often been the target of human rights violations. They are frequently labelled as subversives by security and armed forces personnel and in several cases these verbal attacks have been followed by physical attacks. In May 1994 at a meeting between Colombian non-governmental human rights organizations and state human rights officials and the outgoing Minister of Defence, Rafael Pardo, the Minister of Defence committed himself to issue a public statement in which the legitimacy of the work of human rights workers would be recognized, a move which would help prevent members of the security forces labelling human rights workers as subversive and provide them with a measure of protection.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters

- expressing concern for the safety of Carlos Alberto Ruiz;
- urging that full and impartial investigations be undertaken into death threats received by Carlos Alberto Ruiz, that the results of these investigations be made public and those responsible be brought to justice;
- urging that investigations into the torture of Luis Téllez and Ayda Martínez Nieto be continued, that the results of the investigations be made public and

those responsible be brought to justice;
 - urging the new Minister of Defence to fulfil his predecessor's commitment to issue a public statement recognizing the legitimacy of the work undertaken by human rights workers and urging the authorities to take concrete steps to ensure the safety of human rights workers.

APPEALS TO:

1) Incoming President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano (Takes Office on 7 August 1994)
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño

Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: President Samper, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434/287 7939/2840472

Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Samper

2) Commissioner for the National Police

Señor Comisionado para la Policía Nacional
 Dr. Adolfo Salamanca

Dirección General de la Policía

CAN TR 45 40-11, Santafé de Bogotá

Colombia

Faxes: +57 1 222 6024.

Telegrams: Señor Comisionado Policia Nacional, Bogota, Colombia

Salutation: Señor Comisionado / Dear Commissioner

3) Minister of Defence

Fernando Botero Zea

Ministro de Defensa Nacional

Ministerio de Defensa Nacional

Avenida El Dorado - Carrera 52

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams:Ministro de Defensa Botero Zea, Bogota, Colombia

Telexes:42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO

Faxes:+ 57 1 222 1874

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

4) Minister of the Interior

Dr. Horacio Serpa Uribe

Carrera 8A, No.8-09, Piso 7⁰

Santafé de Bogotá DE

COLOMBIA

Telegrams: Ministro de Gobierno, Bogota, Colombia

Telexes:45406 MINGO CO

Salutation:Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Alternative Legal/Human Rights Association

ILSA

AA 077844

Santa Fé de Bogotá

Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or you Section office, if sending appeals after 16 September 1994.