

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 23/69/96

11 December 1996

Further information on UA 74/96 (AMR 23/17/96, 19 March 1996) and follow-ups (AMR 23/26/96, 9 May; AMR 23/43/96, 23 July; AMR 23/45/96, 15 August; AMR 23/50/96, 1 October; AMR 26/63/96, 22 November) - Fear for Safety / Possible extrajudicial executions / "Disappearance"

COLOMBIA Peasant farmer families living on, and forcibly displaced from, the Bellacruz Ranch, department of Cesar

New names:           Ariel Toscano, peasant farmer leader  
                      Members of the Toscano family

Jesús Toscano (killed)

                      Diosenel Toscano, peasant farmer leader (killed)

                      Dinael Toscano (killed)

José del Carmen Toscano (killed)

News of the killing last week of four more peasant farmers from the Bellacruz Ranch, department of Cesar, have again raised fears for the safety of all the displaced families and peasant farmer leaders.

According to reports received, on 5 December members of a paramilitary group entered the house in Valledupar, department of Cesar, where brothers Diosenel, Dinael and José del Carmen Toscano were hiding and killed them in front of their young children. All three brothers were peasant farmers; Diosenel was also a peasant farmer leader working with the *Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos - Unidad y Reconstrucción* (ANUC-UR), National Association of Peasant Farm Workers - Unity and Reconstruction. Their brother, Jesús Toscano, had been killed on 30 November in Pelaya, department of Cesar, after returning to his house to collect some things he had left there. The paramilitary members responsible for killing Jesús reportedly swore they would kill the whole Toscano family.

The Toscano brothers had gone into hiding after paramilitary leaders entered the land they occupied in the hamlet of La Reforma, municipality of Pelaya, about a month and a half ago, looking for Ariel Toscano, who they failed to find. Ariel later left for Bogotá, while his wife and other members of the family went to Valledupar. Reportedly, paramilitary members have been looking for Ariel Toscano for several months to kill him.

These latest killings raise to at least 30 the number of people killed or "disappeared" by paramilitary groups in relation to the Bellacruz case.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or in your own language:**

- expressing deep concern at the deaths of the Toscano brothers on 30 November and 5 December, and at the continuation of paramilitary violence against the displaced peasant farmers from Bellacruz and those trying to assist them;
- calling for immediate measures to protect the lives of Ariel Toscano, other members of the Toscano family, and the rest of the displaced peasant farmers and their representatives, who remain under threat because of their links with the Bellacruz case;
- pressuring the authorities to explain why, despite repeated calls by national and international human rights organizations, no practical steps have yet been taken to guarantee the safety of the Bellacruz families, put an end to

paramilitary violence against them, dismantle the paramilitary groups, and implement the 28 arrest warrants issued against paramilitary members;  
 - calling for full and impartial investigations, for the results to be made public and those responsible to be brought to justice;

**APPEALS TO:**

President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano  
 Presidente de la República  
 Palacio de Nariño  
 Carrera 8 No. 7-26  
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: President Samper Pizano, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**

**Fax: + 57 1 289 3377 / 286 7434**

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

Attorney General

Dr. Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento  
 Fiscal General de la Nación  
 Fiscalía General de la Nación  
 Calle 35 No. 4-31  
 Apartado Aéreo 29855  
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Fiscal General Valdivieso, Fiscalía General, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Faxes: + 57 1 287 0939 or 288 2828**

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

Minister of the Interior

Dr. Horacio Serpa Uribe  
 Ministro del Interior  
 Ministerio del Interior  
 Carrera 8, No.8-09, Piso 2  
 Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA

**Telegrams: Ministro del Interior Serpa, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 45406 MINGO CO**

**Fax: + 57 1 281 5884/286 0053/286 6524/**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**

Minister of Defence

Dr. Juan Carlos Esguerra Portocarrero  
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional  
 Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
 Avenida Eldorado CAN - Carrera 52  
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

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

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

**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Alternative Legal Association - MINGA

Apartado aéreo 40303, Santafé de Bogotá  
 Colombia

Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos - Unidad y Reconstrucción (ANUC-UR)  
Apartado aéreo 18534, Santafé de Bogotá  
Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia accredited to your country.

**ALSO: Human rights violations against families forcibly displaced from the Bellacruz Ranch has been brought to the attention of several governments. It would be useful to express your concern at the events related above, to your own government, urging it to use its good offices to urge in turn that the Colombian authorities take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of the displaced families, to ensure that immediate action is taken to dismantle paramilitary groups operating in the region, and to bring those responsible for human rights violations to justice.**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 January 1997.