

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 28/10/00

UA 110/00

Fear for

ECUADOR Julio Peláez, lawyer

Alberto Palacios, lawyer

Harold Moreira Zambrano, lawyer

Policemen inside a courthouse have threatened to kill lawyers Julio Peláez, Alberto Palacios and Harold Moreira Zambrano. They are representing a man who survived attempted murder, and two others who were killed, at the hands of police officers. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety.

On 20 April the three lawyers were at Guayas Penal Court, where a witness to the murders and attempted murder was testifying in the office of the judge in charge of the case. One of the two policemen present apparently said to Julio Peláez, "Don't prosecute me, solicitor, or something bad will happen to you," and "Drop this case or soon something will happen that will make you sorry" ("*No me persiga, abogado, o algo malo le va a pasar*". "*Deje este caso porque si no pronto le va a pasar algo de lo que se va a arrepentir*".)

Julio Peláez and Alberto Palacios are representing Pedro Geovanny Baque Tuárez. In February 1999 he was left for dead by men he recognised as National Police officers, who had just murdered the brothers Pedro and Carlos Jaramillo Mera. Harold Moreira Zambrano is representing the two murdered brothers. (see UA 135/99, AMR 28/16/99, 10 June 1999).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Pedro Baque, and his relatives and lawyers, have been threatened and intimidated by police officers since he survived the attempted extrajudicial execution.

Amnesty International has documented numerous cases of intimidation of witnesses to human rights violations in Ecuador, which has consistently failed to implement the United Nations (UN) Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, endorsed by the UN General Assembly in December 1989, and protect witnesses of human rights violations. Article 15 of these Principles clearly states that "Complainants, witnesses, those conducting the investigation and their families shall be protected from violence, threats of violence or any other form of intimidation. Those potentially implicated in extra-legal, arbitrary or summary executions shall be removed from any position of control or power, whether direct or indirect, over complainants, witnesses and their families, as well as over those conducting investigations."

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Julio Peláez, Alberto Palacios and Harold Moreira Zambrano;
- requesting that all necessary steps be taken to guarantee their safety;
- requesting a prompt and effective investigation into the intimidation of the three lawyers, that the findings be published, and that those responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior and Police
Dr. Antonio Andretta Ariza
Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía

Benalcázar y Espejo
Quito
ECUADOR

Fax: + 593 2 580-067

Salutation: Señor Ministro/ Dear Minister

Head of the National Police

General Inspector

Dr. Mario Cevallos Moreno

Comandante General de la Policía Nacional

Ramírez Dávalos 612 y Av. 10 de Agosto

Quito

Ecuador

Telegrams: Comandante General Policía Nacional

Fax: + 593 2 506-066

Salutation: Señor Comandante General/Dear Commander General

State Prosecutor

Dr. Ramón Jiménez Carbo

Procurador General del Estado

Procuraduría General del Estado

Robles 731 y Av. Amazonas

Quito

ECUADOR

Fax: + 593 2 562-060

Salutation: Señor procurador/ Dear State Prosecutor

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization

Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos

"Segundo Montes Mozo S.J."

Av. 10 e Agosto N26-57 y Gral Vicente Aguirre

Edif. Tauro, Of. 802

Quito

ECUADOR

and to diplomatic representatives of Ecuador accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 June 2000.