

20 May 2002

Further information on UA 106/02 (/AMR 23/037/2002, 9 April 2002) - Fear for safety

COLOMBIAMaritze Trigos (f)

Danilo Rueda (m)

Clemencia Correa (f)

Other members of *Comisión Intercongregacional Justicia y Paz*,
Intercongregational Justice and Peace Commission

Danilo Rueda has received a written death threat and Amnesty International is deeply concerned for his safety as well as that of other members of *Justicia y Paz*, (Justice and Peace).

On 12 April, a letter signed by the army-backed paramilitary group *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC), United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia was sent to Danilo Rueda's office at Justice and Peace.

The letter said "... you have been declared a military target... We have investigated you since 1997 and 1999. We have warned you there are no more chances ...You have not listened and we are talking seriously. You have been declared a military target guerrilla member and human rights defender. Death to guerrilla defenders" "...*Usted ha sido declarado objetivo militar...Lo hemos investigado desde 1997 y desde 1999. Le hemos advertido no hay más plazos....Usted no ha escuchado y estamos hablando en serio. Usted ha sido declarado objetivo militar defensor de los derechos humanos guerrillero. Muerte a los defensores guerrilleros.*"

The death threat has raised concern for the safety of all Justice and Peace workers as the security forces and their paramilitary allies, have a policy of labeling human rights defenders as guerrilla collaborators or supporters.

This is done so that they can be presented as legitimate targets in the counter-insurgency war. Such accusations are frequently followed by serious human rights violations such as abductions, murders or torture. These are generally committed by army-backed paramilitary groups, and also by soldiers or the armed opposition group *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

There is no further information on Maritze Trigos and Clemencia Correa.

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

- urging the Colombian authorities to take immediate and effective action to protect Danilo Rueda and other members of Justice and Peace;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation, into the threats against Danilo Rueda and other 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 Colombia

Señor Presidente Andrés Pastrana, Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No. 7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA

Telegram: President Pastrana, Bogotá, Colombia

Telex: 44281 PALP CO

Fax: + 57 1 566 2071

Salutation: Dear President Pastrana / Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente Pastrana

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

Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio,
Fiscal General de la Nación, Fiscalía General de la Nación,
Apartado Aéreo 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 "me da tono de fax por favor")

Salutation: Dear Dr. Osorio / Estimado Dr. Osorio

COPIES TO:

Non-governmental human rights organization

Comisión Intercongregacional De Justicia y Paz
AA 31.861
Santafé de Bogotá
Colombia

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 1 July 2002.