

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/87/99

26 November 1999

Further information on EXTRA 150/99 (AMR 23/76/99, 27 October 1999) - Fear for Safety

COLOMBIA The civilian population of Tibú, Filo Gringo and other communities in the municipality of El Tarra, Norte de Santander department.

New names: Eslava (First name not known), peasant farmer

Paramilitaries operating in the municipality of El Tarra, department of Norte de Santander, have reportedly killed a peasant farmer. The attack highlights the Colombian government's continuing failure to implement its own commitment to dismantle paramilitary groups, despite demands from national and international human rights groups. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of the inhabitants of El Tarra and neighbouring municipalities.

Paramilitary groups have been operating in the area since the end of May. On 20 November 1999 they went into the community of Martillo Bajo and burned down several houses and the communal shop. They reportedly shot dead a peasant farmer named Eslava.

Several hundred people from neighbouring communities were forced to flee their homes by the attack, some of whom have fled to Venezuela.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of the civilian population of the municipalities of El Tarra and Tibú, Norte de Santander department, and urging the authorities to take immediate steps to guarantee their safety;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into the killing of a peasant farmer whose surname is Eslava in the community of Martillo Bajo, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- expressing concern that the authorities have still taken no concrete measures to end paramilitary activity in the region;
- expressing concern at the failure of the government and armed forces to take steps to protect the civilian population of El Tarra and Tibú, despite repeated warnings of an impending paramilitary attack in the area;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

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

Telegrams: President Pastrana, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434/ 284 2186/ 337 1351

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President Pastrana

Norte de Santander Chief of Police

Señor Raúl Antonio Gordillo Nuñez

Comandante

Departamento de Policía

Cucúta, Norte de Santander, Colombia

Telegrams:Comandante, Departamento de Policía, Norte de Santander, Colombia.
Faxes:+ 57 7 576 2744 (Say "Me da el tono de fax, por favor")
Salutation:Sr. Comandante / Dear Commander

Commander of the Armoured Vehicle Corps, Tibú
Coronel Victor Hugo Matamoros
Comandante del Grupo Mecanizado Masa del Ejército
Grupo Mecanizado Masa del Ejército
Tibú, Norte de Santander, Colombia

Telegrams:Comandante, Grupo Mecanizado, Tibú, Norte de Santander, Colombia.
Faxes:+ 57 7 772 2931 (Say "Me da el tono de fax, por favor")
Salutation:Sr. Comandante / Dear Commander

Commander of the 5th Brigade
General Martín Orlando Carreño Sandoval
Comandante de la V Brigada
Calle 14, Carrera 33
Bucaramanga
Santander

Telegrams:Comandante, Quinta Brigada, Santander, Colombia.
Faxes:+ 57 76 455051 / 76 351493
Salutation: Sr. Comandante / Dear Commander

COPIES TO:

Alternative Legal Association
MINGA, AA 40303,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 7 January 2000.