

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 23/08/95
Distr: UA/SC

23 February 1995

Further information on UA 359/94 (AMR 23/76/94, 30 September 1994) - Possible "disappearance" / Fear for Safety

COLOMBIAJairo BARAHONA MARTINEZ, aged 33, human rights activist and community leader

New name:Ernesto FERNANDEZ FEZTER, aged 42, human rights activist and trade union leader

Amnesty International has learned that the body of Jairo Barahona Martínez has been found near the town of Curumaní, Cesar department, showing evidence of torture. This news, coupled with reports that another local activist, Ernesto Fernández Fezter, has been killed in the past few days, have heightened the organization's fears for the safety of other human rights and popular activists in Cesar.

Jairo Barahona was forcibly abducted from his home in Pailitas municipality, Cesar, on 29 September 1994 by armed men who identified themselves as members of the security forces' Anti-extortion and Kidnapping Unit, *Unidad Antiextorsión y Secuestro (UNASE)*. Witnesses reported seeing the vehicle in which he was driven away close to Curumaní. His body was found on the road between Curumaní and Bucaramanga. He had been severely tortured before being shot.

On 20 February 1995, Ernesto Fernández was driving towards his home in Pailitas with his children, aged three and 11, when he was shot dead by three youths. The children were unharmed. Witnesses recognized the youths, whom they stated had been responsible for the deaths of other local community leaders. The killers escaped with apparent ease, despite the fact that the town is heavily militarized as a result of guerrilla activity in the area.

Ernesto Fernández was leader of the trade union ADUCESAR, Association of Cesar Teachers, *Asociación de Educadores del Cesar*. He was also well-known as a human rights activist and was founder of the Pailitas Movement for Civic-Community Integration, *Movimiento de Integración Cívico Comunal de Pailitas*, of which Jairo Barahona was also a member. Since its foundation in 1990, the Pailitas Movement's members have reported frequent incidents of intimidation, death threats and harassment and several of its leaders and activists have been killed. In 1990 Ernesto Fernández received a *sufragio*, an invitation to his own funeral mass which led him to leave the area for several months. The names of the Movement's leaders and other local community activists have appeared frequently on pamphlets and alleged "black lists" which have been circulated in the department of Cesar.

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

- expressing concern at the apparent extrajudicial execution of Jairo Barahona Martínez, urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation, the results of which should be made public and those found responsible brought to justice;
- expressing concern at the killing of Ernesto Fernández Fezter in an area which is heavily militarized, urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation into his death, the results of which should be made public and

those found responsible brought to justice;
 - urging that all possible measures be taken to protect the lives of the leaders of the Pailitas Movement for Civic-Community Integration and other local community activists, in accordance with the declared commitment of President Ernesto Samper Pizano's government to do everything necessary to protect the lives and integrity of human rights workers.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: President Samper Pizano, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434 / 287 7939

Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Samper

2) Procurator General:

Dr. Orlando Vásquez Velásquez
 Procurador General de la Nación
 Procuraduría General
 Edificio Banco Ganadero
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Procurador General Vasquez, Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes:+ 57 1 342 9723 / 281 7531

Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación/Dear Dr. Vásquez

3) Attorney General

Dr. Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento
 Fiscal General de la Nación
 Fiscalía General de la Nación
 Apartado Aéreo 29855
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

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

Faxes:+ 57 1 245 5292

Salutation: Estimado Valdivieso/Dear Dr. Valdivieso

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS 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 12 April 1995.