

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 370/93 Possible Extrajudicial Execution/
Fear for safety

18 October 1993

COLOMBIA Pedro CARVAJAL, *campesino* (peasant farmer)

Amnesty International has learned of the possible extrajudicial execution of Pedro Carvajal in an area of Colombia under intense counter-insurgency operations. Members of the armed forces are implicated in the killing by the accounts of several *campesinos*, who have denounced it to the judicial authorities. Amnesty International now fears for the safety of these witnesses.

One witness has described how, on 22 September 1993, members of the Batallón Luciano D'Elhuyart based in San Vicente de Chucurí, together with paramilitary personnel, arrived in his smallholding in the Betulia municipality. He said that soldiers interrogated him about guerrillas in the area, and threatened to kill him and his seven-year-old son. He said that the soldiers tied three *campesinos* to a tree: Pedro Carvajal, Jorge Torres and Nolberto Quintero. A corporal threatened to cut Pedro Carvajal's throat if he did not hand over the guerrillas' arms cache. Pedro Carvajal argued that he only had his hunting rifle.

The soldiers threatened another witness and other *campesinos* with him that if they informed on what they had seen they would "come and get them". A corporal whose name was given as Jimenez, told him that he would come personally and "disappear" him.

The body of Pedro Carvajal was found the next day in Montebello. One witness reported that Pedro Carvajal had been tortured, whilst another who saw the body reported how the upper part and the back of the head were completely mutilated and the arms and legs seemed to be broken. The army took the body, which had since been dressed in a guerrilla uniform, to San Vicente de Chucurí. There it was buried in an unnamed grave.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Department of Santander, and specifically the Chucurí region, have seen widespread human rights abuses in recent years. The area is a focus of an intensive counterinsurgency strategy, including the installation of paramilitary groups working with the security forces. This strategy has involved systematic abuses, including "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions in which both the paramilitary and the Luciano D'Elhuyart Battalion have been frequently implicated. The bodies of those who have been the victims of alleged extrajudicial executions have been found dressed in guerrilla uniforms and

their deaths explained by the military as the result of clashes between the armed forces and guerrillas.

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

- expressing concern at reports of the apparent extrajudicial execution of Pedro Carvajal, by soldiers from the Luciano D'Elhuyart Battalion and paramilitary personnel;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation into the killing, the results of which should be made public and those found responsible brought to justice;
- urging that the safety of the witnesses to these events be guaranteed;
- urging that all possible measures be taken to protect the fundamental human rights of civilians living in areas, such as Santander, which are undergoing counter-insurgency operations.

APPEALS TO

1) Minister of Defence

Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda
Ministro de Defensa Nacional
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa Pardo Rueda, Bogota, Colombia
Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO
Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874
Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

2) Attorney General

Dr. Gustavo de Greiff
Fiscal General de la Nación
Fiscalia General de la Nación
Apartado Aéreo 29855
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Fiscal General, Fiscalia General, Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes: + 57 1 287 0939
Salutation: Estimado Dr. de Greiff/Dear Dr. de Greiff

3) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia
Telexes: 44281 PALP CO
Faxes: + 57 1 286 7324/7434, 287 7937
Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Gaviria

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Commander of the II Army Division:

Mayor General Harold Bedoya Pizarro
Comandante de la Segunda División del Ejército
Bucaramanga, Santander

2) **Intercongregational Commission for Justice and Peace:**

Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz
AA 52332
Santa Fe 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 29 November 1993.