

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 240/92 Fear of Extrajudicial Execution/Torture and ill-treatment

COLOMBIA: Luis Ramos TOLEDO
Pablo LEÓN, farm administrator
Darío VASQUEZ
Isaias MONSALVE
Jacinta MUÑOZ, female

Amnesty International has learned with concern of the killing of three civilians and the torture and ill-treatment of several others in separate incidents close to the towns of Barrancabermeja and San Vicente in the Magdalena Medio region. These abuses were reportedly carried out by members of the Colombian armed forces who are involved in counter-guerrilla operations in the region.

According to information received by the organization, on 17 July 1992, at approximately 2 a.m., Luis Ramos Toledo was killed by soldiers from the army's Nueva Granada Battalion, Batallón Nueva Granada in the village of Nueva Colombia, near Barrancabermeja. He was later reported by the army as having died in combat. In the same village, soldiers reportedly made threats against the lives of several other civilians.

On 19 July at 8 p.m., Pablo León, a farm administrator, was allegedly tortured and threatened with death by soldiers from the army's Second Mobile Brigade, Brigada Móvil 2. He made an official complaint, *denuncia* about his ill-treatment to the local ombudsman, *personería*.

At dawn on 23 July, Darío Vasquez was reportedly killed by soldiers in the village of El Pueblito. Sources say that he had come to the village to buy lemons. The driver of their vehicle, whose name is not known, was also killed. At 2 p.m. on the same day, in the village of Las Margaritas, soldiers reportedly killed Isaias Monsalve and injured his wife, Jacinta Muñoz.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The largely rural area of the Magdalena Medio in central Colombia has been the focus of political violence for several years following the emergence of guerrilla groups in the 1960s and subsequent militarization of the region during the 1980s. The regional human rights committee, Comite Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, (CREDHOS) has expressed serious concern about the recent escalation of human rights abuses, including torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance" committed by the Colombian army, police and paramilitary organizations working with them, against members of the civilian population in the area.

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

- expressing concern at the reports of human rights violations committed by the armed forces against the rural community of the Magdalena Medio, in particular the reported killings of Luís Ramos Toledo on 17 July, Darío Vasquez and Isaias Monsalve on 23 July and wounding of Jacinta Muñoz, and the torture and ill-treatment of Pablo León on 19 July;
- requesting that there be an immediate investigation into these reported human rights violations, the results of which should be made public and those responsible brought to justice;

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- urging that the government take all possible measures to protect the lives of civilians living in rural communities where the armed forces are operating.

APPEALS TO:

1) 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 3066; + 57 1 286 7324; + 57 1 287 7937

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President Gaviria

2) 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

3) Commander of Mobile Brigade No.2

Brigadier General Fernando Tapias Sterling
 Comandante de la II Brigada
 Ministerio de Defensa
 Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
 Santa Fe de Bogotá
 Colombia

Telegrams: Comandante II Brigada Movil, Bogota, Colombia

Salutation: Sr. Comandante/Dear Commander

4) Commander of the Armed Forces

General Manuel Murillo González
 Comandante del Ejército
 Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
 Santa Fe de Bogotá
 Colombia

Telegrams: Comandante del Ejercito, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 43401 COEJC

Salutation: Sr. Comandante/Dear Commander

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla
Procurador General de la Nación
Procuraduría General
Edificio Banco Ganadero
Carrera 5, No. 15-80
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Regional Human Rights Committee

Señores
CREDHOS
AA 505
Barrancabermeja
Santander
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 September 1992.