

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Possible Extrajudicial Execution

12 March 1991

COLOMBIA: Dario de Jesús VEGA RODRIGUEZ, trade union leader

Amnesty International is concerned at the killing of Dario de Jesús Vega Rodríguez on 4 March 1991 in Medellín, department of Antioquia, in circumstances suggesting he may have been the victim of extrajudicial execution.

Dario de Jesús Vega Rodríguez was shot several times by an armed man at 6.30am as he was taking his child to school in the district of Belencito of Medellín. The child witnessed the killing. Soon after Dario Vega died, the police arrived to remove the body. According to reports, earlier that morning the police, policía metropolitana, had carried out mass arrests in the district of Belencito.

Dario de Jesús Vega Rodríguez, a 46-year-old mechanic was a board member of the Workers' Union of Antioquia Department, miembro de la Junta directiva del Sindicato de Trabajadores del Departamento de Antioquia, SINTRADEPARTAMENTO. SINTRADEPARTAMENTO is currently negotiating with the departmental administration, and several board members including Dario Vega have reportedly received death threats during this period.

The regional procurator has been informed of the killing.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years Amnesty International has received an increasing number of reports of human rights violations in Colombia, including extrajudicial executions. Principal targets have been people associated with trade unions, civic community movements and legal left-wing parties. The majority of abuses have been attributed by Colombian authorities to civilian "death squads", which it claims it is unable to control. However, independent investigations, including judicial inquiries have concluded that many such groups operate under the command or with the support of the Colombian security forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the killing of Dario de Jesús Vega Rodríguez in circumstances suggesting he may have been the victim of extrajudicial execution;
- urging that there be an immediate inquiry into his death, the results of which should be made public;
- expressing concern at reports that threats have been made against the Junta directiva del Sindicato de Trabajadores del Departamento de Antioquia (SINTRADEPARTAMENTO), board of the Workers' Union of Antioquia Department;
- urging the authorities to take measures to ensure that trade unionists are able to conduct their legitimate activities without fear of reprisal.

APPEALS TO:

Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Presidente Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7324; + 57 1 287 7937;

+ 57 1 283 3066

Comandante de la Policía Metropolitana
Carrera 53, No. 52
Medellín

Antioquia, Colombia

**Telegrams: Comandante Policia Metropolitana, Medellin,
Colombia**

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

Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO or 41213 PGNDP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472

COPIES TO:

CONADHEGS
AA 10551
Bogotá
Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 April 1991.