

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/043/2005

16 December 2005

Further Information on UA 48/05 (AMR 23/003/2005, 28 February 2005) Fear for safety

**COLOMBIA**      **Members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Antioquia department**

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Members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Antioquia department have reportedly been threatened by paramilitaries operating in the area. Their lives may be in grave danger.

According to reports received by Amnesty International, at 9am on 14 December, paramilitaries approached a member of the Peace Community at the bus terminal in the municipal capital of Apartadó, saying, "I want to warn you because I knew you years ago, you and your family should leave San Josesito because at the end of the year we are planning an incursion to carry out a massacre. It will be between the 24 and 31 [December] or around that time, we are negotiating with the police and army so that they are not implicated and we can enter and leave the area freely..." (*quiero advertirlo porque lo conocí hace años para que le diga a su familia que se salga de San Josesito que a finales de año tenemos planeada una entrada para hacer una masacre, será entre el 24 y el 31 [diciembre] o por ahí cerquita, estamos negociando con la policía y el ejercito para que ellos no queden untados y podamos entrar y salir libremente...*).

At the same bus terminal on 12 December, two paramilitaries allegedly approached a bus which was going towards San José de Apartadó. One of them reportedly threatened the passengers: "Take it is easy because your time is almost here" ("*Tranquilos que ya casi les llega la hora*").

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Peace Community of San José de Apartadó was created in 1997 in an effort by the civilian population to call on warring factions to respect their right as civilians not to be drawn into Colombia's long-running conflict. Both the security forces and their paramilitary allies on the one hand and *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, (FARC), Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia guerrilla forces on the other, have accused the members of the community of cooperating with their enemies. Since the Peace Community was created over 100 of its members have been killed or disappeared, the vast majority by the security forces and their paramilitaries allies and several by the FARC.

Given the security situation faced by the Peace Community the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of the Organization of American States has called on the Colombian State to take appropriate measures to guarantee the safety of inhabitants of the Peace Community, most recently in its Resolution of 15 March 2005.

The San Josesito camp was set up by members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó who left the village of San José de Apartadó after police set up a permanent presence there following the massacre of eight members of the community in February 2005 (see original UA). Amnesty International has no information regarding advances in the criminal investigations into the killings.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of the inhabitants of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, following reports that paramilitaries are planning a massacre in the area;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into reported paramilitary threats against members of the Peace Community, for the results to be made public, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;

- calling for all measures, deemed appropriate by these communities, to be taken to guarantee their safety in line with the Resolution issued by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of the Organization of American States on 15 March 2005;
- calling on the authorities to respect the right of the civilian population including the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó not to be drawn into the conflict;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into the killings of eight people in the Peace Community in February 2005, for the results to be made public, and for those responsible to be brought to justice.
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups operating in Antioquia, urging that the results are made public and those found responsible for supporting and participating in such groups are brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez

Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-2, Bogotá, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 1 337 5890/342 0592**

**Salutation: Dear President Uribe/ Excmo. Sr. Presidente Uribe**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dra. María Carolina Barco Isakson

Ministra de Relaciones Exteriores Interior y de Justicia, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

Calle 10 No 5-51, Palacio de San Carlos, Bogotá, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 1 562 7822**

**Salutation: Dear Madam / Sra. Ministra**

Attorney General

Dr. Mario Germán Iguarán

Fiscal General de la Nación

Fiscalía General de la Nación

Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite)

Bogotá, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 1 570 2000 (a message in Spanish will ask you to enter extension 2017)**

**Salutation: Estimado Sr. Germán/ Dear Mr Germán**

**COPIES TO:**

Human Rights Ombudsman

Sr. Volmar Antonio Pérez Ortiz, Defensor del Pueblo, Defensoría del Pueblo,

Calle 55, No. 10-32/46 oficina 301, 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 27 January 2006.