

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 53/005/2005

8 September 2005

Further Information on UA 226/04 (AMR 53/011/2004, 16 July 2004) and follow-ups (AMR 53/020/2004, 29 October 2004, AMR 53/001/2005, 25 January 2005 and AMR 53/004/2005, 21 June 2005) - Fear for safety/Death threats

VENEZUELA Juan Barrios (m), his wife and two children (names unknown)
 Oscar Barrios (m), nephew of Luis Barrios
 Carolina García (f), wife of Luis Barrios
 Elvira Barrios (f)]
 Oneida Barrios (f), mother of Jorge and Rigoberto]
 Eloisa Barrios (f)]
 Inés Barrios (f)] brothers and sisters of
 Pablo Sólorzano (m)] Narciso and Luis Barrios
 Beatriz Barrios (f)]
 Jorge Barrios (m), aged 15
 Justina Barrios (f), grandmother of Caudy, Rigoberto and Jorge

Killed: Rigoberto Barrios (m), aged 16 (previously given as 'Rigo')
 Luis Barrios (m), brother of Narciso Barrios
 Narciso Barrios

Another member of the Barrios family has allegedly been threatened by members of the Aragua State police. Amnesty International is concerned for Juan Barrios' safety and that of his wife and two children.

On 8 August, Juan Barrios was threatened by two uniformed police officers in the neighbourhood of Las Casitas in the town of Guanayen. They warned him that he would suffer the same fate as other members of his family, namely Narciso, Luis and Rigoberto Barrios, who were all allegedly murdered by police.

Prior to this incident, Juan Barrios had been threatened by police as he returned from work on 15 July. They reportedly told him that he would be killed if he continued to report them to the authorities. Several members of the family have fled from Guanayen in fear for their safety. Juan Barrios and his immediate family however, did not have the resources to do so.

Following the threats against him, Juan Barrios filed a complaint before *Fiscalía* No. 20 (Public Prosecutor's Office) of the *Ministerio Público* (Public Ministry). However, Amnesty International is unaware of any progress in the investigations into the murders of Narciso, Luis and Rigoberto, nor of investigations into complaints made by the family regarding death threats and intimidation by state police officers.

On 29 June, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights called upon the Venezuelan State to ensure the safety of the Barrios Family and to provide them with effective protection, as well as fully investigate all the complaints filed by the family. According to information received by Amnesty International, the police protection given to the family has been sporadic and ineffective.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Juan Barrios and his family, following recent death threats against him;
- calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into these threats, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;

- reiterating your concern for the safety of other members of the Barrios family, who have been continually threatened and harassed by Aragua state police officers;
- urging the authorities to act immediately to provide adequate protection measures to the Barrios family to guarantee their safety, in accordance with their wishes, as requested by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and to comply with the other measures issued by the Court on 29 June 2005;
- asking what progress has been made in the investigations into the murders of Narciso Barrios, Luis Barrios, and Rigoberto Barrios as well as into incidents of intimidation and threats reported by the family.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Interior and Justice

Ministro de Interior y Justicia, Sr. Jesse Chacón
Ministerio del Interior y Justicia
Avenida Urdaneta Esquina de Platanal
Edificio Interior y Justicia Despacho del Ministro, Piso 3
Caracas, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 212 506 1685

Salutation: Estimado Señor Ministro/Dear Minister

Attorney General

Fiscal General de la República, Dr. Isaías Rodríguez
Avenida Universidad, Esquina Pele el ojo a Misericordia
frente a Parque Carabobo
Caracas, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 212 576 4419

Salutation: Estimado Señor Fiscal General/Dear Attorney General

Governor of Aragua State

Sr. Gobernador del Estado de Aragua
Sr. Didalco Bolívar
Palacio de Gobierno
Avenida de Miranda
Maracay
Estado de Aragua, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 243 237 8843

Salutation: Estimado Señor Gobernador/Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization

Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Justicia y Paz del Estado Aragua
Calle Negro Primero, Oeste
N 98, frente al Liceo 'Valentin Espinal', Cruce con Av. Ayacucho
Maracay
Estado Aragua, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 243 233 6363 (if voice answers, say 'tono de fax, por favor')

and to diplomatic representatives of VENEZUELA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 October 2005.