PUBLIC AI Index: AMR 23/008/2004

04 February 2004

Further Information on UA 50/03 (AMR 23/20/2003, 21 February 2003) and follow-ups (AMR 23/053/2003, 6 August 2003 and AMR 23/071/2003, 14 November 2003) Fear for safety New Concern: Death Threats

COLOMBIA Wilson David Higuita (m)] Community leaders

Gildardo Tuberquia (m)

Other members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Antioquia

department

New Names: Edelmira Durango (f)

Arturo David (m)

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Wilson David Higuita, Edelmira Durango and Arturo David, who are three members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Antioquia Department, following death threats against them.

According to reports on 31 January 2004 several members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó were approached by a man in Apartadó while waiting for a bus to San José. The man said that he was there on behalf of paramilitaries who operated in the Urabá region. He told those present that the paramilitaries intended to kill Wilson David Higuita, Edelmira Durango and Arturo David and carry out attacks and robberies against the community as a whole.

According to witnesses, the man who issued the threats had been seen taking part in previous attacks by army-backed paramilitaries against the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó. The attacks have been reported to the authorities, but there is currently no information about whether any measures have been taken to bring those responsible to justice.

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, and insisting that all measures deemed appropriate by them are taken to guarantee their safety;
- 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 and so respect their right not to be militarized;
- expressing concern at the continued death threats made by army-backed paramilitaries and their presence on the road between San José de Apartadó and Apartadó, despite the heavy military presence in the region;
- urging the authorities to take immediate and decisive action to confront and dismantle these groups, in line with repeated United Nations recommendations.
- calling for full and impartial investigations into links between the security forces and paramilitary forces in Antioquia department, for the results to be made public and for those members of the security forces responsible for operating in unison with paramilitary forces or supporting them to be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

<u>President of the Republic</u> Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez Presidente de la República Palacio de Nariño Carrera 8 No.7-26

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

+ 57 1 342 0592 / 337 5890 Fax:

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

Minister of the Interior and Justice

Sr. Sabas Pretelt de la Vega, Ministro del Interior y de Justicia Ministerio del Interior Av. Jiménez No 8-89 Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: +57 1 560 4630 Salutation: Dear Sir / Sr. Ministro

Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio, Fiscal General de la Nación Fiscalía General de la Nación Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite)

Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 570 2022 / 2000 (you will hear a message in Spanish asking you to enter

extension 2017)

Salutation: Dear Dr. Osorio / Estimado Dr. Osorio

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 17 March 2004.