

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/16/00

UA 71/00

Fear for Safety / Extrajudicial Executions

24 March

COLOMBIAKilled: Otoniel BAUTISTA MANTILLA and Ricardo Antonio GOES RESTREPO

Fear for safety: forcibly displaced communities of the Cacarica River Basin

Amnesty International is very concerned for the safety of a displaced community sheltering in Turbo, department of Antioquia, after two of its members were shot dead on 22 March 2000, reportedly by paramilitaries operating in the area.

Otoniel Bautista Mantilla was shot dead in his home in the Uber Quintero district of Turbo early in the morning by two gunmen who had gone there demanding to see his identity papers and searching his house. They shot him in front of his wife and daughter after, refusing to lie on the floor, he said to them: "*Si me van a matar, mátenme de pie*", "If you're going to kill me, kill me standing". As they left they ordered children on their way to school not to tell anyone what they had seen.

Ricardo Antonio Goes Restrepo was killed in the same district of Turbo later that day by two gunmen believed to be members of the same paramilitary group. He reportedly died instantly after being shot several times in the face. He had been sitting on his verandah at the time. Earlier that day he had attended Otoniel Bautista's wake.

Both men had been involved in a process aimed at allowing the displaced in Turbo to return to their homes in the Cacarica River Basin, department of Chocó where, three years earlier, thousands had fled a large-scale joint offensive by the army and paramilitary forces in the area.

The community had been negotiating with the government to ensure their safety would be guaranteed and to obtain a commitment by the security forces that they would prevent paramilitary and guerilla invasions into the area once they had returned. Having reached agreements with the government some of displaced started to return on 28 February, a time of increasing concern for the security of the Cacarica communities.

During their displacement the communities have been threatened by paramilitaries who operate with the support of the security forces. Several have been the victim of serious human rights violations. In recent weeks, known paramilitaries have been seen in or near places where the displaced communities are sheltering. This is despite the fact that Turbo and its surroundings are heavily-militarized. The following paramilitary threat to kill members of the displaced communities was reportedly heard recently: "*la lista de desplazados que van a morir es larga*", "the list of displaced who are going to die is a long one".

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the military and paramilitary offensive of February 1997 many people accused by paramilitaries and the armed forces of being guerrilla collaborators or sympathizers were killed or "disappeared". Many fled their homes because of threats and killings by guerrilla groups. Those displaced are often considered by the armed forces and their paramilitary allies to be guerrilla sympathizers or collaborators and as a result are often victim to death threats and serious human rights violations (see UA 246/98, AMR 23/71/98, 17 September 1998; UA 03/99, AMR 23/01/99, 8 January 1999; UA 260/99, AMR 23/69/99, 5 October 1999 and UA 291/99, AMR 23/78/99, 8 November 1999)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern that on 22 March 2000 Otoniel Bautista Mantilla and Ricardo Antonio Goes Restrepo, both members of the displaced Cacarica community, department of Chocó, currently sheltering in Turbo, department of Antioquia, were shot dead at their homes, reportedly by paramilitaries;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into the apparent extrajudicial execution of the two men, for the results to be made public and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern for the safety of the displaced communities of the Cacarica River Basin, particularly as they return to their homes, and for the safety of other displaced communities in the department of Chocó;
- calling on the authorities to take all measures deemed appropriate by the communities themselves to guarantee their safety;
- urging the authorities to take immediate and decisive action to combat and dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with repeated government commitments and United Nations recommendations.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Andrés Pastrana, Presidente de la República  
Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No. 7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: President Pastrana, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434/ 284 2186/ 337 1351**

**Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President Pastrana**

Attorney General

Dr. Alfonso Gómez Méndez,  
Fiscal General de la Nación, Fiscalía General de la Nación,  
Diagonal 22B 5201, Apartado Aéreo 29855, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Fiscal General, Fiscalía General, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Faxes: + 57 1 570 2022 (If the call is answered, say "Fax, por favor" and wait for the signal)**

**Salutation: Estimado Dr. / Dear Dr.**

Minister of Defence

Dr. Luis Fernando Ramírez Acuña  
Ministro de Defensa Nacional  
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
Avenida Eldorado CAN - Carrera 52  
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Intercongregational Commission for Justice and Peace

Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz

AA 31861

Santafé de 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 5 May 2000.