

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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PLEASE SEND UP TO TEN APPEALS PER SECTION

UA 124/91 Death Threats/Fear of Extrajudicial Execution 10 April 1991

COLOMBIA : Luis Emiro MOSQUERA PALACIOS

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Luis Emiro Mosquera Palacios, a leader of the Partido Comunista Colombiano (PCC), Colombian Communist Party, in Arauca department. The PCC is a legal political organization in Colombia.

Luis Emiro Mosquera Palacios has reportedly been subjected to harassment by the security forces for a number of years, apparently because of his political activities. He was arrested on several occasions on accusations of being a "subversive" but was subsequently released without charge by the courts because of lack of evidence against him. On 3 April 1991 he presented a complaint to the Delegado Procurador para los Derechos Humanos, Procurator for Human Rights, describing incidents that had occurred since 1987, the most recent of which resulted from his participation in a meeting of a peasant committee in Arauca in September 1990 and a subsequent protest march. On 10 October 1990, an army colonel, jefe del comando operativo No. 2, head of Operative Command No. 2, publicly accused him in a statement made to journalists of being the brains behind the protest march, as well as alleging that he had stolen cattle and carried out kidnappings. Formal charges of a similar nature were also reportedly brought against him in the Cucutá Public Order Court (juzgado de Orden Público). Shortly afterwards, another army colonel, the commander of the Rebeiz Pizarro battalion, is said to have made a radio broadcast asking the local population to help to capture Mosquera and ordering his troops to bring him in dead or alive since he was the most dangerous delinquent in Arauca.

During the month of March 1991, army detachments based in the Arauca region reportedly increased their counter-insurgency operations in the area, in the course of which many people were arbitrarily detained and in one case, the person was subsequently found dead with signs of torture. Other left-wing leaders are also said to have received death threats. Amnesty International is therefore concerned that the life of Luis Emiro Mosquera Palacios continues to be in danger.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Human rights violations are occurring on an increasing scale in Colombia against a background of escalating civil conflict and drugs-related violence. The local civilian population is often perceived by the armed forces as potential guerrilla collaborators and has, as a result, been subjected to arbitrary arrest, torture, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution by army personnel and civilians working for them. Principal victims have included civic and community leaders and members of legal left-wing parties.

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

- seeking clarification of the basis for the charges brought against Luis Emiro Mosquera Palacios;
- asking that an immediate investigation be conducted into reports that an army officer ordered him to be captured dead or alive;
- requesting that the necessary steps be taken to ensure his safety and that procedural guarantees be respected.

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

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

General Oscar Botero Restrepo
Ministro de Defensa Nacional
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO or 44561 CFAC CO

Faxes: + 57 1 222 2401

COPIES TO:

Señores
CINEP
AA 25916
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 22 May 1991.