

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 23/23/94
Distr: UA/SC

UA 64/94 Extrajudicial Executions / Fear for Safety 21 February 1994

COLOMBIAEdgar SUESCUN ZAMBRANO - killed
Sandra CORREA, (child) - killed
Fanny CORREA (f) - seriously injured
William CORREA (child) - seriously injured

Paulino VELANDIA BARON, municipal councillor - threatened / attacked

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Paulino Velandia Barón, Fanny Correa and her son William Correa, following a violent assault on 5 February 1994 on a house in El Cocuy, Boyacá department, by members of the Colombian armed forces. Fanny Correa's husband Edgar Suescan Zambrano and their small daughter Sandra Correa were both killed in the attack.

Paulino Velandia has been the victim of threats and persecution for several years, reportedly by agents of the security forces. At 8 pm on 5 February, as he left a meeting of the town council, he was intercepted by soldiers from the *Tarqui* Battalion, whose base is in Sogamoso. He was searched and his identification card checked. The soldiers reportedly threatened to kill him, warning him that if he escaped on this occasion they would come looking for him in his home and kill him together with his wife and children.

Following this incident Paulino Velandia went to the house where Fanny Correa and Edgar Suescan lived with their two young children, William and Sandra Correa.

Soldiers arrived at the house and reportedly forced Paulino Velandia, Edgar Suescan and Fanny Correa to sign sheets of paper which were blank apart from their identification numbers.

Later in the evening, the soldiers reportedly returned. They entered the house, killed Edgar Suescan and Sandra Correa and seriously wounded Fanny Correa and her son William. They threw explosive material into the interior of the house and pursued Paulino Velandia, presumably in order to attempt to kill him too.

The immediate reasons for the attack are not clear. Those wounded in the attack are now recovering in hospital. Sources state that their relatives have not been able to see them as they are under permanent police guard. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for their safety and for the safety of Paulino Velandia.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years widespread and systematic human rights violations have occurred in Colombia, including extrajudicial executions, "disappearance", torture and arbitrary arrest. Particular targets have been community leaders and members of left-wing parties and trades unions. President César Gaviria Trujillo has repeatedly pledged his government's commitment to protect human rights. However, members of the Colombian armed and security forces continue to commit serious abuses with virtual impunity. Only exceptionally are perpetrators brought to justice; the vast majority of members of the armed forces responsible for gross human rights violations remain in active service.

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

- expressing concern at the reported extrajudicial execution of Edgar Suescan and the minor Sandra Correa, the serious wounding of Fanny Correa and minor William Correa and the threats and persecution of Paulino Velandia which took

place on 5 February 1994 by soldiers from the army's Tarqui battalion;
 - urging that all possible measures be taken by the authorities to protect the lives of Fanny and William Correa and of municipal councillor Paulino Velandia, so that they can carry out their lawful activities without fear;
 - urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation into these events, the results of which should be made public and those found responsible brought to justice;
 - requesting that relatives be allowed access to those wounded in the attack.

APPEALS TO

1) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia
Telexes: 44281 PALP CO
Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434/ 287 7939
Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Gaviria

2) Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla
 Procurador General de la Nación
 Procuraduría General
 Edificio Banco Ganadero
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 284 0472
Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación/Dear Dr. Arrieta

3) Advocate for the People:

Dr. Jaime Córdoba Triviño
 Defensor del Pueblo
 Defensoría del Pueblo
 Calle 35 No. 7-25 piso 5
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams:Defensor del Pueblo Trivino, Defensoria del Pueblo, Bogota, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 288 6683
Salutation: Estimado Dr Triviño/Dear Dr. Triviño

4) Governor of Boyacá Department

Señor Alfonso Jose Salamanca Llach
 Gobernador del Departamento de Boyacá
 Gobernación de Boyacá
 Tunja, Boyacá, Colombia
Telegrams:Gobernador Salamanca Llach, Tunja, Boyaca, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 87 426540
Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Sir

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Lawyers' Association:

Corporación Colectivo de Abogados

AA 44456
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Human Rights and Educational Organization

Señores

CINEP

AA 25916

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 4 April 1994.