

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 23/29/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 135/93 Possible "disappearance"

27 April 1993

COLOMBIA: Eduardo AVILA FONSECA, aged 27, political activist

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Eduardo Avila Fonseca, who has not been seen since 20 April 1993 when he was detained in Bogotá by armed men who were reportedly identified as members of the national police.

According to eyewitnesses, Eduardo Avila was last seen at 6 pm on 20 April in the Commercial Sector of Bogotá's Chapinero district, Sector Comercial de Chapinero, at the intersection of the roads *Carrera 13* and *Calle 63*. He was seized by four armed men in civilian dress, who carried police identification and forced him into a taxi, driving him to an unknown destination. His family were informed of his capture in an anonymous telephone call between 8 and 8.30 that evening.

Eduardo Avila is an activist with the legal opposition party M-19 Democratic Alliance, Alianza Democrática M-19 (AD M-19). The AD M-19 was formed in March 1990 when the armed opposition group 19 April Movement, Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19) disbanded following peace negotiations with the government in which the guerrillas were granted a general amnesty. The AD M-19's leader and presidential candidate in the May 1990 elections, Carlos Pizarro Leongómez, was assassinated a month before the elections took place. Eduardo Avila had been Carlos Pizarro's bodyguard.

Eduardo Avila's detention has been denounced to the office of the Procurator Delegate for Human Rights, Procuraduría Delegada para los Derechos Humanos and to the Procurator General's office, Procuraduría General. His family have made inquiries at local police installations and searched the morgues for his body but there is no information as to his whereabouts.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years widespread and systematic human rights violations have occurred in Colombia, including torture, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution. Particular targets have been members of left-wing parties, community and trade union leaders. The majority of such abuses have been attributed by the Colombian authorities to armed opposition groups or to civilian "death squads" which it claims it is unable to control. However, independent investigations have concluded that many such groups operate under the command or with the support of the Colombian armed and security forces.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Eduardo Avila Fonseca, who has not

been seen since 20 April 1993 when witnesses observed his detention in Bogotá by armed men identified as police;

- urging an immediate and thorough inquiry into his whereabouts;

- urging that if he is in detention, that he be humanely treated and allowed access to lawyers and relatives;

- urging that if in detention, that he be charged with a recognizable criminal offence or released immediately.

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APPEALS TO

1) Attorney General:

Dr. Gustavo de Greiff

Fiscal General

Fiscalia General

Apartado Aéreo 29855

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Fiscal General, Fiscalia General, Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes: + 57 1 287 0939

Salutation: Estimado Dr. de Greiff / Dear Dr. de Greiff

2) Director General of the Police:

Mayor Miguel Antonio Gómez Padilla

Director General de la Policía Nacional

Tr. 45, No. 40-11

Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Dir.-Gen. Policia Nacional, Bogota, Colombia

Salutation: Sr. Director General / Dear Sir

3) Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla

Procurador General de la Nación

Procuraduría General

Edificio Banco Ganadero

Carrera 5, No. 15-80

Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472

Salutation: Sr. Procurador de la Nación / Dear Dr. Arrieta

4) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño

Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7324, + 57 1 287 7937

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President Gaviria

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Association for Relatives of the "Disappeared":

Señores

ASFADDES

AA 011446

Santa Fe 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 8 June 1993.