

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 63/99 (AMR 23/42/99, 24 May 1999) - Fear for Safety/Abduction

COLOMBIA Piedad Córdoba de Castro (f), human rights defender and Liberal Party senator

Human Rights Defender Piedad Córdoba de Castro was released by the right-wing national paramilitary alliance, *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC), United Self-Defense Forces on 4 June 1999, in the municipality of Necoclí, Antioquia department.

Members of the International Red Cross, the Colombian Senate and the Colombian Attorney General's Office were present at her release.

Piedad Córdoba de Castro, Liberal Party Senator and president of the Senate's Human Rights Commission, was abducted in Medellín on 21 May 1999 by a group of armed men. In a public statement issued the next day, the AUC claimed responsibility.

Piedad Córdoba de Castro has frequently spoken out about the duty of the state to combat paramilitary groups and is a high profile supporter of legislative proposals to criminalize "disappearances" and reform the Military Penal Code.

The international attention on her case was crucial in securing her release.

No further action is required by the Urgent Action network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals on her behalf.