

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "Disappearance"

16 September 1992

COLOMBIA: Armando RODRÍGUEZ PARRADO, surgeon, hospital director

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Armando Rodríguez Parrado, who has not been seen since he was abducted by armed men on 11 September 1992 from his residence in the town of Restrepo, Meta department.

According to information received by the organization, Armando Rodríguez, who is a surgeon and also director of Restrepo's hospital, Director del Hospital del Municipio de Restrepo, was taken from his residence in the hospital grounds at approximately midnight. He was reportedly abducted by a group of masked and heavily armed men who forced him into a waiting vehicle.

On the day of his "disappearance", Armando Rodríguez had stated that he believed he had been followed for the four previous days. He had also been receiving death threats which he believed came from the armed forces.

His "disappearance" has been denounced to the regional authorities, including the Governor of Meta department and inquiries have been made at local police and military bases, but his detention has been denied and his whereabouts remain unknown.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Coinciding with an escalating offensive by the Colombian armed forces against the armed opposition group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, in the department of Meta, Amnesty International has received an increasing number of reports of human rights violations against non-combatant civilians by army personnel in areas undergoing counter-insurgency operations. The majority of these human rights violations have been attributed by the Colombian authorities to paramilitary groups which it claims it is unable to control. However independent investigations, including judicial inquiries, have concluded that many such groups operate under the command or with the support of the Colombian armed forces.

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

- expressing concern for the physical safety of Armando Rodríguez Parrado, who has not been seen since 11 September 1992;
- requesting an immediate and thorough investigation into his possible "disappearance" in order to bring all those responsible to justice, the results

of which should be made public;

- urging that if in detention he be charged with a recognizable criminal offence and brought before a competent court or released;

- urging that if in detention, Armando Rodríguez Parrado be humanely treated and allowed access to a lawyer and to relatives.

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APPEALS TO

1) Minister of Defence:

Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda

Ministro de Defensa Nacional

Ministerio de Defensa Nacional

Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52

Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa Pardo Rueda, Bogota, Colombia

Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO

Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

2) Commander of the VII Brigade:

Brigadier General Eduardo Camelo Caldas

Comandante de la VII Brigada

Calle 37, No. 33B-33

Villavicencio

Meta

Colombia

Telegrams: Comandante VII Brigada, Villavicienvio, Meta, Colombia

Salutation: Sr. Comandante / Dear sir

3) Commander of 21 Vargas Battalion:

Comandante Alberto Neira

Batallón de Aéreotransportada No. 21 "Vargas"

Granada

Meta

Colombia

Telegrams: Comandante Batallon 21 Vargas, Granada, Meta, Colombia

Salutation: Sr. Comandante / Dear sir

4) 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

Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO or 41213 PGNDP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472

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

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights and Educational Organization:

Señores

CINEP

AA 25916

Santa Fe de Bogotá

Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 October 1992.