

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 263/93 Fear for Safety

6 August 1993

COLOMBIA: About 150 human rights workers, trade unionists and grassroots leaders

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of about 150 human rights workers, trade unionists and leaders of grassroots organizations. According to information received, military intelligence in Colombia has compiled a list of some 150 individuals and institutions whom, it claims, are collaborators or supporters of guerilla groups in Colombia. This list has been passed by the Security Forces to Q.A.P., a Colombian Television station which intends to broadcast the list shortly.

There is concern that publication of the names of the individuals will put their lives at risk and will damage both their reputation and that of any organization or institution with which they are associated. Trade unionists, human rights workers and popular leaders have been a particular target for human rights violations, including extrajudicial execution, "disappearance", torture and maltreatment in recent years. In many cases the human rights violations against such individuals were preceded by the publication of inaccurate or distorted information about them in the media.

Lawyers from the Comisión Andina de Juristas - sección Colombiana - Andean Commission of Jurists, Colombian office, have presented to the courts an *acción de tutela*, a procedure intended to protect the constitutional rights of individuals. In the action, they point to rulings of the Constitutional Court which make it clear that information compiled by military intelligence or in the hands of the security forces should not be divulged to the media or to third parties but can only be used by the security forces themselves and in accordance with the constitutional rights of the individual.

The action calls on Judge Reporto of the Juzgado Segundo Penal Municipal in Bogotá to prevent publication of the list in any form by the QAP TV station or by any other public media. It requests the Ministry of Defence and the security forces to refrain from divulging any information to the media or to third parties claiming links between individuals and guerilla organizations.

Many human rights organizations, trade unions and popular institutions are in the forefront of the defence of human rights in Colombia. Amnesty International is concerned that such accusations may discourage individuals from making public complaints about violations or pursuing them through the courts.

Several individuals working in the field of human rights have already been approached for information by correspondents of QAP. A lawyer from the División Nacional de Quejas de la Defensoría del Pueblo (National Complaints section of the Office of the Defender of the People) has confirmed both the existence of the material and the fact that it has been handed to the TV station.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of the 150 people named in the report compiled by military intelligence and made available to QAP TV station;

- urging that the authorities take appropriate steps to ensure that personal information on the individuals and institutions named in the report is not made public in breach of their constitutional rights and the rulings of the Constitutional Court;

- requesting a full impartial inquiry to determine how the information was obtained by the TV station and urging that administrative measures are taken against those responsible for such a breach of confidence.

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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) Attorney General

Dr. Gustavo de Greiff
Fiscal General de la Nación
Fiscalía General de la Nación
Apartado Aéreo 29855
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: **Fiscal General, Fiscalía General, Bogotá, Colombia**

Faxes: **57 1 287 0930**

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

3) President

Sr. Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: **Presidente Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia**

Telexes: **44282 PALP CO**

Faxes: **57 1 286 7324/7434/287 7937**

Salutation: **Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Gaviria**

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**

Faxes: **57 1 284 0472**

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

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Andean Commission of Jurists
Comisión Andina de Juristas
AA 58533

Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

President of the Constitutional Court.
Dr. Hernand Herrera Vergara
Presidente de la Corte Constitucional
La Corte Constitucional
Calle 72 No 7-69
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Sr. Juez Reporto
Juzgado Segundo Penal Municipal de Bogotá
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 17 September 1993.