

**Note to UA Coordinators:**  
**Please treat as a priority UA, if possible.**

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

**AI Index: AMR 23/50/91**  
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**11 September 1991**

**UA 307/91**                    **Fear of "Disappearance"/Torture**

**COLOMBIA:**                    **Gildardo GOMEZ**

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Amnesty International is concerned for the physical safety of Gildardo Gómez, who was last seen on 6 September 1991 being taken away by a military patrol close to the town of Yondo, Antioquia department.

Gildardo Gómez and a friend left Yondo on 6 September 1991 on a motorbike to look for wood. At about 5 km from Yondo they were stopped by a military patrol from the army's "Nueva Granada" anti-aircraft Battalion, *Batallón Antiaéreo Nueva Granada*, based in Barrancabermeja. The patrol reportedly asked for their identity papers and then took Gildardo Gómez off to the back of an abandoned house which was situated close by, ordering his friend to follow with the motorbike. After searching the men, their hands and feet were tied and they were asked insistently whether they had links with the guerrilla movement. The soldiers then reportedly used threats in an attempt to intimidate Gildardo Gómez' friend into accusing Gildardo of being a guerrilla and when this failed they led Gildardo Gómez away from the house towards some bushes. His friend, who was left bound and gagged, managed to escape and reached the town of Barrancabermeja. These events were denounced to the regional Procurator and human rights groups. The army reportedly admitted Gildardo Gómez' detention to the Procurator but claimed that he too had escaped. The whereabouts of Gildardo Gómez remain unknown.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The largely rural area of the Magdalena Medio has been a focus of political violence for several years following the emergence of guerrilla groups in the 1960s and subsequent militarization of the region during the 1980s. Despite the progress that has been made through peace talks between several of the guerrilla groups and the government, there has been a continuation of political violence. In areas where guerrilla forces are active, the local population is often perceived by the armed forces as potential guerrilla collaborators and has, as a result, been subjected to arbitrary arrest, torture, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution by army personnel and paramilitary forces.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern at the possible "disappearance" of Gildardo Gómez, following his reported detention by army personnel from the *Batallón Antiaéreo Nueva Granada* and requesting an immediate and effective investigation to establish his whereabouts;
- urging that he be brought before a competent court or released;
- urging that, whilst in detention, he be treated humanely and provided full access to lawyers and relatives;

**APPEALS TO:**1. President of the Republic:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo  
**(Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente)**  
 Presidente de la República  
 Palacio de Nariño  
 Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Presidente Gaviria, Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**  
**Faxes: + 57 1 283 3066**  
**+ 57 1 286 7324**  
**+ 57 1 287 7937**

2. Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla  
**(Salutation: Sr. Procurador General de la Nación)**  
 Procurador General de la Nación  
 Procuraduría General  
 Edificio Banco Ganadero  
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80  
 Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO or 41213 PGNDP CO**  
**Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472**

3. Minister of Defence:

Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda  
**(Salutation: Sr. Ministro)**  
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional  
 Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
 Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52  
 Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO**  
**Faxes: +57 1 222 1874**

4. Coronel Héctor Manuel Bernal Caicedo  
 Comandante del Batallón "Nueva Granada"  
 Calle 12  
 Pueblo Nuevo  
 Barrancabermeja  
 Santander, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Comandante del Batallon "Nueva Granada"**  
**Barrancabermeja, Colombia**

**COPIES TO:**

CREDHOS  
 AA 505  
 Barrancabermeja  
 Santander, Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 October 1991.