

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Possible Extrajudicial Executions/Fear of Further Killings

30 September 1993

COLOMBIA: 12 children killed: Harizon ORTIZ, Wilson, "Wipy", Julio,  
"Indio", Jorge, Javier, "Tumaquito",

Jaime, Carlos, "Caliche", and Villota

At risk: more than 200 children on the streets of Cali and social  
workers working with them.

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Amnesty International has learnt of the recent killings of 12 children in the city of Cali, Valle del Cauca department, in the south-west of Colombia. The organization believes that the children may have been the victims of extrajudicial execution and it fears for the safety of 200 other children who are also believed to be at risk.

Senior officials in the Cali city council (*Alcaldía*) have denounced the killings and attributed them to elements in the police force. They believe that the killings are an attempt to undermine a council initiative to disarm and rehabilitate members of juvenile street gangs in Cali. The project - the "Plan Pandillas" (Street-gang Project) - has been running since May 1993 under the auspices of the city council and the Peace, Security and Development Council (*Consejería para el Desarrollo, la Seguridad y la Paz - DESEPAZ*).

It has succeeded in persuading more than 200 children in high risk areas of the city, including the 12 youths who were killed, to submit themselves to the project and hand over their weapons. The project's future is now in doubt and there are serious fears for the safety of the 200 other juveniles taking part and the local government employees running it.

Amnesty International has received an increasing number of reports of killings of so-called "social undesirables" ("desechables sociales") including street children, juveniles from street gangs, vagrants and suspected delinquents in the principal Colombian cities and now increasingly in the smaller towns around the country. Murder operations directed against these people are routinely termed "social clean-up operations" ("operaciones de limpieza social") and are generally attributed to shadowy "death squads".

However, in a number of cases evidence has emerged that the so-called "death squads" have been made up of members of the National Police, frequently operating with the support of local tradespeople.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years widespread and systematic human rights violations have occurred in Colombia, including torture, arbitrary arrest, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution. President César Gaviria Trujillo has repeatedly pledged his government's commitment to protect human rights. However, members of the Colombian armed and security forces continue to commit serious abuses with virtual impunity. Civic leaders, trade unionists, human rights activists and those considered "social undesirables" are amongst

the groups frequently targeted by the security forces for arbitrary arrest and other forms of human rights abuse.

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

- expressing concern at the recent killings of the 12 children in Cali, in circumstances suggesting they may have been victims of extrajudicial execution;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough inquiry, its results made public, and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- urging that the government take all possible measures to protect the lives of those children and local government employees who are involved in the rehabilitation project "Plan Pandillas".

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**APPEALS TO**

1) Governor of the Department of Valle de Cauca:

Señor Carlos Holguin Sardi  
 Gobernador del Departamento de Valle del Cauca  
 Gobernación de Valle del Cauca  
 Carrera 6ª, Calles 9ª y 10ª  
 Cali  
 Valle del Cauca

**Telegrams: Gobernador del Departamento de Valle del Cauca, Cali, Colombia**

**Faxes: + 57 1 810 414**

**Salutation: Estimado Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor**

2) 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**

3) 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**

4) Attorney General

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

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

**Faxes: + 57 1 287 0939**

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

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

1) Local authorities:

Consejero de Paz  
Consejero para el Desarrollo,  
la Seguridad y la Paz (DESEPAZ)  
Alcaldía de Santiago de Cali  
Torre Alcaldía Oficina 1-09  
Cali, Valle del Cauca, Colombia  
**Faxes: +57 23 688138/674719**

2) Local Newspapers:

El Pais  
Apartado Aereo 1608  
Cali, Valle del Cauca  
**Faxes: +57 23 83 50 14**

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 11 November 1993.