

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 418/91 Possible Extrajudicial Execution

29 November 1991

COLOMBIA: **Marlene de Jesús GIRALDO**

Amnesty International has learned with concern of the killing of Marlene de Jesús Giraldo in Campo Vijao community, Yondó municipality, department of Antioquia, in circumstances suggesting she may have been the victim of extrajudicial execution.

According to a sworn declaration made by a witness to the killing before the local ombudsman, *personero*, of Yondó, members of the Colombian armed forces arrived in Campo Vijao early in the morning of 24 November 1991. At approximately 5.30am the witness, who was in bed, reports that he heard gunfire and soldiers shouting "Bastard guerrillas, come out of your houses" "*Salganse guerrilleros hijos de puta de las casas*". On leaving his house with his family he was directed to a hut where they separated men from women and forced them to lie on the floor face-down with others from the community. The soldiers accused them of being guerrillas and verbally threatened them. One man asked if he could go and look for Marlene de Jesús Giraldo, who had left the house before the start of the military operation to urinate and not returned. Two soldiers were also sent to look for her. The civilian returned to say that Marlene de Jesús Giraldo had been killed. Those in the hut reportedly protested at the news of the killing, whilst the soldiers claimed that the civilians could not prove military responsibility for her death.

The soldiers would not initially allow Marlene de Jesús Giraldo's body to be moved. When they did allow it to be taken to her house, her husband claimed that in the meantime the body had been moved and jewellery had been taken from it. One of the soldiers, who claimed to be a member of the Judicial Police, *Policia Judicial*, assisted with the removal of the body.

When asked about the killing, the soldiers allegedly responded that "this was one of the problems of war and that it wasn't their fault, that soldiers were killed too and we had to realise that war caused these tragedies", "*que esos eran problemas de la guerra y que ellos no tenian la culpa, que a ellos también les mataban soldados y que entonces nosotros teníamos que ser concientes que la guerra dejaba esas tragedias.*"

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The largely rural area of the Magdalena Media, which covers parts of the departments of Magdalena, Bolivar, César, Boyacá, Santander and Antioquia, 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 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 are 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.

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

- expressing concern at the killing of Marlene de Jesús Giraldo in circumstances suggesting official responsibility;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough inquiry into her death, the results of which should be made public and those responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic:

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

**Excelentísimo Señor Presidente/
Dear President**

Telegrams: Presidente Gaviria, Bogota, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

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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

**Señor Procurador General de la
Nación/Dear Procurator General**

Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogota, Colombia

Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO or 41213 PGNDP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472

Minister of Defence:

Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda
Ministro de Defensa Nacional
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogota, Colombia

Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO

Faxes: +57 1 222 1874

COPIES TO:

Comisión Andina de Juristas
AA 58533
Bogota, Colombia
(Andean Commission of Jurists)

Señores
CINEP
AA 25916
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia
(Human Rights and Educational Organization)

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 10 January 1992.