

UA 249/99

Fear for

**COLOMBIA** **Fear for Safety: Antonio Barrera Riaño, Fredisminda Alvarez, Plinio Ramiro Macheca and Juanario Tapiero (Villavicencio) . Antonio Mocada, Oswaldo Guerrero and Oliva Gamboa (Cabuyaro) .**

**Killed: Fabio Lugo Capera.**

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There is serious concern for the safety of community leaders and other residents of the Villa Llorena district of Villavicencio, capital of Meta department, and the Carpintero settlement in the nearby municipality of Cabuyaro. This follows a recent upsurge in paramilitary activity in the region. Both of these places are populated by communities that have been displaced by the escalating armed conflict.

On 14 September 1999 leaflets containing death threats against community leaders, signed by paramilitary organisations, were distributed in Villa Llorena. The leaflets named Antonio Barrera Riaño, president of the *Junta de Acción Comunal*, community working group, Fredisminda Alvarez, Plinio Ramiro Mahecha and Juanario Tapiero. All these people are actively involved in the work of the *Junta de Acción Comunal*, which recently staged protests to draw attention to the plight of the internally displaced living in Villa Llorena.

On 7 September 1999 eight heavily-armed paramilitaries went into Carpintero and announced that they were looking for Fabio Lugo Capera, a community leader, Antonio Moncada, Oswaldo Guerrero and Oliva Gamboa. They succeeded in locating only Fabio Capera, whom they abducted and later killed.

Amnesty International continues to fear for the safety of the leaders and residents in both these displaced communities.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Peasant communities in disputed zones in Colombia's long-running civil conflict have frequently suffered human rights violations. Neither the armed forces and their paramilitary allies nor the left-wing armed opposition groups recognize the civilian population's neutrality in the conflict.

Members of the Colombian army and security forces and their paramilitary allies continue to commit serious human rights violations with virtual impunity. Over the past five years several thousand civilians have been killed by paramilitary groups throughout the country. The Colombian government suspended the constitutional legal base for the formation of paramilitary organizations and issued directives to the armed forces to combat and disband such groups in 1989, yet they continue to work with the support of the security forces in many areas of the country.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of community leaders and residents in the communities of La Llorena, Villavicencio, and Carpintero, Cabuyaro municipality, both in Meta department, particularly Antonio Barrera Riaño, Fredisminda Alvarez, Plinio Ramiro Macheca and Juanario Tapiero (Villavicencio), Antonio Mocada, Oswaldo Guerrero and Oliva Gamboa (Carpintero);
- urging the authorities to take immediate steps to guarantee their safety;
- calling for full prompt and impartial investigations into the killing of

Fabio Lugo Capera, community leader in Carpintero;

- urging that the results of these investigations be made public and that those responsible be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Andrés Pastrana, Presidente de la República  
Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No. 7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: President Pastrana, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Tx: 44281 PALP CO**

**Fax: + 57 1 286 7434/ 284 2186/ 337 1351**

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

Minister of the Interior

Dr. Néstor Humberto Martínez, Ministro del Interior  
Ministerio del Interior, Carrera 8, No.8-09, Piso 2  
Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA

**Telegrams: Ministerio del Interior, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 45406 MINGO CO**

**Fax: + 57 1 286 8025 / 281 5884 / 342 3201**

**Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister**

Procurator General:

Dr. Jaime Bernal Cuellar, Procurador General de la Nación  
Procuraduría General, Edificio Banco Ganadero  
Carrera 5, No. 15-80, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Procurador General, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Faxes: + 57 1 342 9723/281 7531/284 0472**

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

Governor of Department of Meta

Señor Alan Jara, Gobernador del Departamento de Meta  
Gobernación del Meta, Carrera 33 No. 38-45, Villavicencio, Meta, Colombia

**Telegrams: Gobernador de Meta, Villavicencio, Meta, Colombia**

**Fax: + 57 866 25424 (Say : Me da tono de fax, por favor)**

**Salutation: Sr. Jara**

**COPIES TO:**

Intercongregational Commission for Justice and Peace

Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz, AA 31861, Santafé de Bogotá.

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 5 November 1999.