

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 15 per section.

UA 401/93 "Disappearance"/ Fear for Safety.

12 November 1993

COLOMBIA: Evangelista LEÓN

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Evangelista León who was reportedly detained on 31 October 1993 by members of the Colombian army in the municipality of Montañita, Caquetá department. The detention was apparently carried out by members of the Heroes of Guepi Battalion (*Batallón Héroes de Guepi*) at a military checkpoint close to the battalion's headquarters. The police inspector of Unión Peneya and members of the local community witnessed the arrest.

According to information received, the army authorities have admitted detaining Evangelista León, but have repeatedly claimed that he has been released. His whereabouts remain unknown. There is serious concern for his safety because the armed forces frequently claim to have released people who have "disappeared" after their detention.

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 for the safety of Evangelista León who has not been seen since being detained by members of the Colombian army in the municipality of Montañita, Caquetá department, on 31 October 1993;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough enquiry into his whereabouts;
- urging that if he is in detention, that he be humanely treated and allowed access to lawyers and relatives;
- urging that if he is in detention, that he be charged with a recognizable criminal offence or released immediately.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of Colombia:
Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia
Telexes: 44281 PALP CO
Faxes: + 57 1 286 7324/7434 or 287 7937
Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/ Dear President Gaviria

2) Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla
 Procurador General de la Nación
 Procuraduría General
 Edificio Banco Ganadero
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80
 Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 284 0472
Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación
Dear Dr. Arrieta

3) Minister of Defence

Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional
 Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
 Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
 Santa Fé 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

4) Commander of XII Brigade

Coronel Efraín Serrano Castañeda
 Comandante de la XII Brigada
 Calle 16, Carrera 14
 Florencia, Caquetá, Colombia
Telegrams: Sr Coronel Serrano Castañeda, XII Brigada, Florencia, Caquetá Colombia
Salutation: Sr. Coronel/Dear Colonel

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Advocate for the People:

Dr. Jaime Córdoba Triviño
 Defensor del Pueblo
 Defensoría del Pueblo
 Avenida 39, No. 16-42
 Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 232 4640

2) ANDAS

AA 3511
 Santa Fé 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 24 December 1993.