

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 55/94 (AMR 23/20/94, 17 February 1994) -
Extrajudicial Executions/Fear for Safety

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Elizabeth TABARES (f).

Amnesty International has received further information on the extrajudicial execution of nine (not ten people as previously reported) people, including those named above, in the community of Puerto Lleras, Saravena municipality, department of Arauca on 3 January 1994.

According to reports received the *Procuraduría General de la Nación* -Procurator General's Office, has charged nine soldiers: a lieutenant-colonel, two majors, a captain, a lieutenant, a sub-lieutenant and three volunteer soldiers for their part in the extrajudicial executions of the nine people who they claimed had been guerrillas, as well as ill-treatment and illegal detention of several hundred other civilians. The soldiers all belong to the *Batallón General Gabriel Reveiz Pizarro* - General Gabriel Reveiz Pizarro Batallion based in Saravena.

According to the preliminary conclusions reached by the Procurator General's Office, the victims were peasant farmers who had been killed in retaliation for a guerrilla attack; also on 3 January 1994, on a military base in Saravena in which 3 soldiers had been killed and four injured.

The military unit involved in the killings had first blocked all entry and exit points to Saravena and forced approximately 500 inhabitants into the central park. They were held for approximately eight hours. On the same day forces from the General Gabriel Reveiz Pizarro Batallion moved into Puerto Lleras and killed the nine civilians. They claimed that the nine were guerrillas killed in combat. The remainder of the Puerto Lleras community were retained for 24 hours during which time they were subjected to ill-treatment at the hands of the military.

The charges of the Procurator General's Office range from the illegal retention of 500 people, attempts to cover up the events of the case and presenting untruthful testimony, torture and ill-treatment, and the extrajudicial executions of the nine civilians.

Amnesty International welcomes the fact that the Procurator General's Office has identified some of the perpetrators of the extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations in Puerto Lleras. A sanction by the Procurator General's Office can lead at most to dismissal or a fine. Amnesty International is concerned that as yet no criminal charges have been brought to bear on any member of the security forces for these extrajudicial executions. The organization is also concerned that the criminal case continues to be under the jurisdiction of the military justice system which has consistently failed to convict members of the security forces responsible for human rights

violations.

In recent years members of the security forces responsible for human rights violations have rarely been brought to justice. On the occasions when they are brought to trial their cases are judged within the military justice system which has consistently failed to convict security force agents. This impunity has contributed to the systematic violation of human rights by the security forces.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing continuing concern for the extrajudicial execution of nine members of the community of Puerto Lleras by members of the armed forces on 3 January 1994;
- welcoming the fact that the Procurator General's Office has identified several members of the armed forces involved in the killings;
- urging that the Colombian authorities should ensure that members of the security forces responsible for these killings should now be brought to justice and that criminal investigations should be handled by the civilian justice system, such a commitment on the part of the Colombian authorities would be in line with the stated policy objectives of the new government of President Samper to stamp out impunity.

APPEALS TO:

President of Colombia:

Señor Ernesto Samper Pizano
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño
 Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: President Samper, Bogotá,
 Colombia**

Telex: 44281 PALP CO

Fax: + 57 1 286 7434/287 7939

Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Samper

Procurator General:

Dr. Orlando Vásquez Velásquez
 Procurador General de la Nación
 Procuraduría General
 Edificio Banco Ganadero
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: Procurador General Velásquez, Bogotá, Colombia

Fax:+ 57 1 342 9723

Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación/Dear Dr. Velásquez

Minister of Defence

Dr. Fernando Botero Zea
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional
 Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
 Avenida El Dorado - Carrera 52
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams:Ministro de Defensa Botero Zea, Bogota, Colombia

Telex:42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO

Fax:+ 57 1 222 1874

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

Minister of the Interior

Dr. Horacio Serpa Uribe

Ministro de Gobierno

Ministerio de Gobierno

Carrera 8A, No.8-09, Piso 7^o

Santafé de Bogotá DE

Colombia

Telegrams: Ministro de Gobierno, Bogota, Colombia

Telex:45406 MINGO CO

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights and Educational Organization

Señores

CINEP

AA 25916

Santa Fé de Bogotá

Colombia

Andean Commission of Jurists

Comisión Andina de Juristas

AA 58533

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 October 27 1994.