

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 407/92 Torture /Fear for safety

22 December 1992

COLOMBIA: **Luís Fernando MARTINEZ**  
**Sonebia PINZON HERRERA (female)**  
**Marcela BECERRA PINZON (female), aged 2**

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Amnesty International is gravely concerned at the reported torture and ill-treatment of Luís Fernando Martínez, Sonebia Pinzón and her two year-old daughter, Marcela Becerra Pinzón, on 7 November 1992 in Sabaneta, Santander department, by members of the armed forces. Amnesty International is seriously concerned that Luís Fernando Martínez and his family may be subjected to further human rights violations.

According to Luís Fernando Martínez and Sonebia Pinzón's testimonies, which the organization has just received, the family were asleep in bed when, at approximately 1.30 am, they were woken up by five members of the army's 2nd Mobile Brigade, Brigada Móvil No 2, which was temporarily based at the nearby police station of Sabaneta. The soldiers reportedly hammered on the door, demanding to be admitted and claiming that they had come to search for weapons which they believed were hidden there. When Luís Fernando Martínez opened the door, one of the soldiers entered and held a gun to his chest, while the other four went to the room where Sonebia Pinzón and her children were sleeping. They attacked Sonebia Pinzón, attempting to rape her. When Luís Fernando Martínez pleaded with the soldiers to leave her alone, the soldiers reportedly threatened to kill him if Sonebia Pinzón did not submit to them. The soldier who was holding a gun to Luís Fernando Martínez' chest took him to the door of the house and fired a shot into the air. At this, two of the soldiers left the house and went in the direction of the army base. The remaining two soldiers threatened to take Luís Fernando Martínez to the base and the one guarding him began to lead him in that direction, insulting and threatening him. On the way, Luís Fernando Martínez passed his mother's house and shouted out that he was being detained. The soldier reportedly punched him and threatened to shoot him. His repeated cries for help brought his mother out and as a result of her pleading he was allowed to go with her into her home. The soldier threatened him, saying that if he returned to his own house he would be shot.

According to Sonebia Pinzón's statement, one of the two soldiers remaining in the house took her, together with her three year-old boy, to the patio. There she was raped, against threats that Luís Fernando Martínez would be killed if she did not submit. She states the soldier appeared to be under the influence of drugs or drink. Sonebia Pinzón heard the screams of her two year-old daughter, who was in another room with her 8 month-old baby, but was prevented from going to her. She states that she was then raped again, by the soldier who had taken Luís Fernando Martínez away and later returned to the house. When the two soldiers returned to the child's room to look for a mislaid pistol, Sonebia Pinzón followed them and found her two year-old daughter Marcela Becerra Pinzón semi-conscious. She had been raped by the remaining soldier, who had fallen asleep on the child's bed. The soldiers left soon afterwards.

A medical examination of Marcela Becerra Pinzón was carried out and the torture and ill-treatment of the family was denounced to local and regional authorities, including the ombudsman, personería, of Sabana de Torres and the regional procurator, Procurador of Bucaramanga.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The largely rural area of the Magdalena Medio in central Colombia has been a focus of political violence for several years following the emergence of

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guerrilla groups in the 1960s and subsequent militarization of the region during the 1980s. Human rights abuses have escalated in the region including enforced recruitment, torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance" committed by the Colombian army, police and paramilitary organizations working with them, against members of the civilian population perceived as potential guerrilla collaborators.

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

- expressing concern at the torture and ill-treatment of Luis Fernando Martínez, Sonebia Pinzón Herrera and Marcela Becerra Pinzón and the rape of Sonebia Pinzón and her two year old daughter, Marcela, by members of the army's Mobile Brigade;
- urging for an immediate independent investigation into the torture to bring all those responsible to justice and for the results to be made public;
- urging that the family receive full compensation from the state and seeking guarantees for the safety of Luis Fernando Martínez, Sonebia Pinzón Herrera and Marcela Becerra Pinzón.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

) 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**

**Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO / 41213 PGNDP CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472**

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

2) Minister of Defence

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

**Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa Pardo Rueda**

**Santa Fe de Bogota, Colombia**

**Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO / 44561 CFAC CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

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

3) President of Colombia:

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

**Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá,  
Colombia**

**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 286 3066 / + 57 1 286 7324 / + 57 1 287 7937**

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

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Organization:

Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos

AA 12817

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 sections office, if sending appeals after 2 February 1993.**