

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 23/74/94
Distr: UA/SC

UA 356/94

Fear of "disappearance" / Fear for Safety 27 September 1994

COLOMBIA Alvaro RODRÍGUEZ CARVAJAL, aged 30, taxi driver

Alvaro ARÉVALO, aged 26, salesman

Tomás DÍAZ HURTADO, aged 42, tradesman and barber

On 15 September 1994, police intelligence agents were seen detaining Alvaro Rodríguez Carvajal, Alvaro Arévalo, Tomás Díaz Hurtado and two other unnamed men in Barranquilla, Atlántico department. The two unnamed men subsequently escaped, but the whereabouts of the other three are unknown and there is serious concern for their safety.

According to witnesses' reports, the five men were in the San Miguel pawn shop in Murillo Street, Barranquilla when eight heavily-armed police intelligence agents, (usually known as F-2) arrived in a vehicle and on motorbikes. The men were searched and some hand guns were found. All five men were then forced into the police vehicle and driven to an unknown destination. At some point the two unnamed men escaped. One was subsequently blackmailed and threatened by one of the F-2 agents, who warned him that he was lucky "to have escaped the operation", "*haber escapado al operativo*" and that he could have been "another victim" "*una víctima más*".

The F-2 has reportedly denied all knowledge of these events, and relatives of Alvaro Rodríguez Carvajal, Alvaro Arévalo and Tomás Díaz Hurtado have been unable to establish their whereabouts.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years widespread and systematic human rights violations have occurred in Colombia, including extrajudicial executions, "disappearance", torture and arbitrary arrest. President Ernesto Samper Pizano, who assumed office on 7 August 1994, has publicly stated that tackling the human rights situation will be a priority for his government. However, members of the Colombian armed and security forces continue to commit serious abuses with virtual impunity. Only exceptionally are perpetrators brought to justice; the vast majority of members of the armed forces responsible for gross human rights violations remain in active service.

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

- expressing concern at the possible "disappearance" of Alvaro Rodríguez Carvajal, Alvaro Arévalo and Tomás Díaz Hurtado following their reported detention by agents of police intelligence on 15 September 1994 in Barranquilla, Atlántico department;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation into their whereabouts, the results of which should be made public;
- urging that if they are in detention, that they be humanely treated, that they be allowed access to lawyers and to their families and that they be released unless charged with a criminal offence.

APPEALS TO

1) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano
Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: President Samper Pizano, Bogotá, Colombia
Telexes: 44281 PALP CO
Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434/287 7939/284
Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Samper

2) 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 Vasquez, Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 342 9723
Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación/Dear Dr. Vásquez

3) Advocate for the People:
 Dr. Jaime Córdoba Triviño
 Defensor del Pueblo
 Defensoría del Pueblo
 Calle 35 No. 7-25 piso 5
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
**Telegrams:Defensor del Pueblo Trivino, Defensoria del Pueblo,
 Bogota, Colombia**
Faxes:+ 57 1 288 6683
Salutation: Estimado Dr Triviño/Dear Dr. Triviño

4) Attorney General
 Dr. Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento
 Fiscal General de la Nación
 Fiscalía General de la Nación
 Apartado Aéreo 29855
 Santafé de Bogotá
 Colombia
Telegrams:Fiscal General Valdivieso, Fiscalía General, Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 287 0939 or 288 2828
Salutation: Estimado Valdivieso/Dear Dr. Valdivieso

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Association for Relatives of the "Disappeared"
 Señores
 ASFADDES
 AA 011446
 Santafé 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 9 November 1994.