

## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **COLOMBIA**

#### **Amnesty International condemns guerrilla group pipeline attack leaving more than 50 civilians dead**

AI condemns the indiscriminate killing and injuring of civilians in Machuca, municipality of Segovia, department of Antioquia.

On 18 October a section of the oil pipeline owned by the consortium company OCENSA passing through the municipality of Segovia was blown up. The subsequent explosion engulfed the local community of Machuca, in the jurisdiction of Fraguas de Segovia, causing the death of more than 50 civilians and injuring a further 60 in nearby villages.

On 19 October the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) admitted to blowing up the pipeline, though they reportedly stated that the pipeline was blown up several kilometres from the communities affected. Amnesty International is concerned that the ELN ignored the risk to civilian communities, given the fact that the pipeline runs a course close to several inhabited areas.

By carrying out such an attack close to Machuca the ELN utterly disregarded the lives of the local civilian population thus flagrantly violating international humanitarian law. There can be no excuse to justify exposing civilians to such terrible consequences.

The apparent total disregard for civilian life with which the attack was carried out breaches the fundamental principles of the laws of armed conflict, which prohibit direct or indiscriminate attacks on civilians.

Amnesty International repeats its call to all sides in the conflict to ensure their military actions do no target or endanger the lives of the civilian population.

ENDS.../