

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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27 October 1994

Further information on UA 204/94 (AMR 23/45/94, 27 May 1994) - Possible  
Extrajudicial Execution / Fear for Safety

COLOMBIA                    Eliécer Ojeda Jaime, aged 44, trade union leader  
                                 Héctor Enrique Herrera, aged 40, community worker

new names:                    Hermes RENDÓN, aged 22, civic and human rights activist  
                                 César Augusto QUINTERO, aged 16, school student

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Another activist with Ocaña's Popular Housing and Self-building Association, *Asociación de Vivienda Popular Autoconstrucción de Ocaña "ASOVIPA"* has been attacked. Hermes Rendón was shot dead in the Ocaña region of Norte de Santander department, his death further heightening fears for the safety of human rights and popular activists in a region where paramilitaries continue to operate with virtual impunity.

Reports indicate that at 5pm on 24 October 1994, Hermes Rendón and the son of a friend of his, César Augusto Quintero, were getting off a motorcycle in the Cañaveral district of the town of Ocaña, when two gunmen opened fire on them. The two fled from their attackers, but at 6am next morning Hermes Rendón's corpse was found near the Carmen district. He had been shot from behind and had bullet wounds to the head, neck and leg. César Augusto Quintero's leg was wounded and he was taken to hospital where his condition is said to be serious. As witness to the attack, Amnesty International remains concerned for his safety.

Local inhabitants are reported to have recognized the two gunmen as being members of a paramilitary force operating in the Ocaña region under the names: "*Los Tuneros*", "*Mano Negra*" and *COLSINGUE* (*Colombia Sin Guerrilla, Colombia without guerrillas*).

Well-known as a civic activist, Hermes Rendón lived in the Santa Clara de Ocaña district, and worked closely with *ASOVIPA*. He was a member of the Human Rights Team of the Province of Ocaña, *Equipo de Derechos Humanos de la Provincia de Ocaña*, as a member of which he was well informed of the human rights situation in the Ocaña region. He had worked closely with the victims of human rights violations and had helped them to denounce the violations to the municipal authorities. On several occasions he had denounced the security forces for direct responsibility in violations or for failure to take appropriate action.

He also denounced paramilitary activity in the region, especially that carried out by *COLSINGUE*, which has been responsible for terrorizing the civilian population in the Norte de Santander department and the southern part of Cesar department (see UA 299/94, AMR 23/63/94, 12 August 1994, and UA 315/94 (AMR 23/65/94, 26 August)). In January and February 1993 members of the human rights team were reportedly threatened. Hermes Rendón had reportedly been the victim of two previous attempts on his life in the Ocaña region in recent years.

To Amnesty International's knowledge, no one has been brought to justice for the gun attack of 23 May 1994, in which Eliécer Ojeda Jaime was killed and Héctor Enrique Herrera, also a *ASOVIPA* activist, was seriously wounded.

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

- expressing concern about the killing of Hermes Rendón on 24 October 1994 in Ocaña in circumstances suggesting that he was extrajudicially executed;
- expressing concern for the safety of César Augusto Quintero injured during in the same attack;
- calling for an immediate and thorough investigation, the results of which should be made public and those responsible be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take all possible measures to protect the lives of human rights activists in line with promises made by the new government of President Samper;
- urging the authorities to take all possible measures to protect the lives of ASOVIPA members and other popular activists;
- urging the government to ensure that paramilitary groups operating in the region of Ocaña and elsewhere in the country are dismantled in line with the stated human rights policy of the government of President Samper.

**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**  
**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**  
**Faxes: + 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**  
**Faxes:+ 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**  
**Telexes:42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO**  
**Faxes:+ 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<sup>0</sup>  
 Santafé de Bogotá DE  
 COLOMBIA

**Telegrams: Ministro de Gobierno, Bogota, Colombia**

**Telexes:45406 MINGO CO**

**Faxes:+ 57 1 281 5884**

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

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Organization:

MINGA

Calle 19 No. 4-88

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 7 December 1994.