

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Extrajudicial Execution/Fear for safety

27 January 1994

COLOMBIA:

Gilberto CLARO LOZANO - former mayor of Playa de
Belén

Amnesty International has learnt with concern of the killing of Gilberto Claro Lozano, in circumstances suggesting he was a victim of extrajudicial execution, on 19 January 1994 in the city of Ocaña, department of Norte de Santander.

According to reports, Gilberto Claro Lozano was shot four times in the head by two unidentified individuals as they rode passed him on a motorbike in the market square of Ocaña at midday. At the time of his killing, the city was under military occupation. However, despite this, Gilberto Claro Lozano's killers were allowed to escape the scene of the crime, completely unchallenged.

Gilberto Claro Lozano was the former mayor of the municipality of Playa de Belén, Norte de Santander department. During his time in office, he was reportedly persistently harassed by the security forces because of his work for the community. Just one hour before his death, he had announced his candidature for reelection in the forthcoming municipal elections.

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of other community leaders and legitimate political party members standing in municipal elections, especially considering that this killing took place in broad daylight at the time of a heavy military presence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years widespread and systematic human rights violations have occurred in Colombia, including torture, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution.

Particular targets have been members of left-wing parties, community and trade union leaders. The majority of such abuses have been attributed by the Colombian authorities to armed opposition groups or to civilian "death squads" which it claims it is unable to control. However, independent investigations have concluded that many such groups operate under the command or with the support of the Colombian armed and security forces. There is also evidence to suggest that members of the National Police are members of these "death squads".

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

- expressing concern about the killing of Gilberto Claro Lozano, in circumstances suggesting he was a victim of extrajudicial execution, in Ocaña, Norte de Santander department on 19 January 1994;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough inquiry into this killing, its results made public, and that those responsible be brought to justice;
- urging that the investigation also seek to establish how the killing could be perpetrated in broad daylight in a town that was at that time under a heavy military presence;
- urging that the authorities take all possible measures to protect the lives of community leaders and legitimate political party members standing in

municipal elections.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of Colombia:

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

Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7324/7434/287 7937

Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/

Dear President Gaviria

2) Procurator General:

Dr. Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla
 Procurador General de la Nación
 Procuraduría General
 Edificio Banco Ganadero
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80
 Santa Fé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta,
 Bogotá, Colombia**

Faxes:+ 57 1 284 0472

Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación

Dear Dr. Arrieta

3) Minister of Defence:

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

**Telegrams:Ministro de Defensa Pardo Rueda
 Bogota, Colombia**

Telexes:42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO

Faxes:+ 57 1 222 1874

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

4) Governor of Department of Norte de Santander:

Dr. Alvaro Salgar Villamizar
 Gobernación de Norte de Santander
 Avenida 5, Calle 13 y 14
 Cúcuta, Norte de Santander
 Colombia

Faxes: +57 75 710 510

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Human Rights and Educational Organization:

MINGA

Apartado Aéreo 40303

Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes: +57 1 334 3765

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 10 March 1994.