

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 23/11/98

25 February 1998

Further Information on UA 43/98 (AMR 23/08/98, 11 February 1998) - Fear for Safety

COLOMBIAN New names: Manuel ZAPATA  
Luis Hernando GOEZ

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There is serious concern for the safety of Manuel Zapata and Luis Hernando Goez, members of the community of San José de Apartadó, municipality of Apartadó in the northern region of the department of Antioquia, following recent incidents of death threats against them. These fears are heightened since, in the past, those who have denounced human rights violations have frequently been victim to further serious human rights violations. The threats against these two men also heightens continued fears for the safety of all members of the community.

According to information received, Manuel Zapata was arbitrarily detained on 12 February 1998 by members of the Colombian Army in the nearby hamlet of Arenas Altas where he had been working on his farm. Members of paramilitary forces operating with the military patrol reportedly urged the military commander to kill Manuel Zapata as, they said, all the inhabitants of San José de Apartadó were guerrillas. Manuel Zapata was released the next day.

On 15 February members of the Colombian Army reportedly detained Luis Hernando Goez who they accused of being a guerilla. His hands and legs were allegedly bound and he was threatened with knives and machetes which were placed against his neck; a rifle was pointed at his head. The soldiers reportedly took him up a mountainside where they threatened to kill him and bury him in order to ensure that nobody should find out what had happened to him. The soldiers reportedly said they intended killing the inhabitants of San José de Apartadó since all of its inhabitants were guerrillas. Luis Hernando Goez was finally released and warned not to talk about the incident.

In the past those accused of being guerrilla sympathizers have frequently been the victim of serious human rights violations committed by the security forces or their paramilitary allies.

**NB: Further Information on UA 318/97, AMR 23/71/97, 8 October 1997, gave the name of Luis Hernando Goes as one of the inhabitants of San José de Apartadó killed by the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)*, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, an armed opposition group. Information received subsequent to issuing the Urgent Action was that his name was Luis Fernando Aguirre.**

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

- calling for full and impartial investigations into the assaults and threats against Manuel Zapata on 12 February 1998 allegedly by members of the Colombian Army and unidentified gunmen believed to be members of paramilitary forces operating with the support of the security forces and against Luis Hernando Goez on 15 February allegedly by members of the Colombian Army, and for the results to be made public and those responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern for the safety of all the residents of the community of San José de Apartadó;

- calling for a full and impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups operating in the region and for members of the security forces responsible for supporting such groups to be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated governmental commitments.

**APPEALS TO:**President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano  
 Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño  
 Carrera 8 No. 7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: President Samper, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**

**Faxes: + 57 1 284 2186/289 3377/286 7434**

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

Minister of Defence

Dr. Gilberto Echeverri Mejía  
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional, Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
 Avenida Eldorado CAN - Carrera 52, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogotá, Colombia**

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

**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

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

Governor of Antioquia

Dr. Alberto Builes Ortega  
 Gobernador del Departamento de Antioquia, Gobernación de Antioquia  
 Calle 42B, # 52-106, Medellín, Antioquia, Colombia

**Telegrams: Gobernador Departamento, Antioquia, Colombia**

**Faxes: + 57 4 381 1342**

**Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor**

**In appeals to the Governor of Antioquia, acknowledge that although guerrilla forces in Colombian have violated international humanitarian law this in no way justifies human rights violations by the Colombian security forces and their paramilitary allies.**

**COPIES TO:**Intercongregational Commission for Justice and Peace

Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz, AA 31861, Santafé de Bogotá

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 April 1998.