

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/15/98

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 10 per section

UA 74/98

Fear for safety / Possible "Disappearance" / Possible

Ext.

COLOMBIA Oscar Ivan Tabares Toro, 24, soldier

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Oscar Ivan Tabares Toro, a soldier with six years service in the Colombian army, reportedly "disappeared" on 28 December 1997. The circumstances surrounding his "disappearance" and the reported involvement of military personnel gives rise to serious concern for his physical safety.

Oscar Ivan Tabares "disappeared" from the *Escuela de Artillería*, School of Artillery, in San Juanito, in the area bordering the departments of Cundinamarca and Meta, after he reportedly attacked a senior officer on 28 December 1998.

On 6 January 1998 friends of Oscar Ivan Tabares at the School of Artillery reluctantly informed his mother that her son had "disappeared" after throwing a grenade at an officer.

On 7 January his parents were told by the military authorities that their son had committed a serious crime and that charges had been filed against him, including "rebellion" and "desertion". They said he was now most likely to have joined the guerrilla forces. The School of Artillery is reported as having told Oscar Ivan Tabares's parents that their son was mentally ill and a drug-addict, and had deserted. Further requests by the family for information from the School of Artillery have been refused.

On 8 January the family informed the police of the "disappearance" of Oscar Ivan Tabares Toro. Further complaints were also filed before other authorities in the following days.

On 18 January a soldier who was attached to the School of Artillery at the time of Oscar Ivan Tabares's "disappearance" reportedly told the family that their son had been killed and his body dumped in the nearby village of Toledo.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Oscar Ivan Tabares Toro, a soldier attached to the School of Artillery, who reportedly "disappeared" on 28 December 1997 following an incident at the school;
- calling for a full, impartial and independent investigation into his whereabouts, for the results to be made public and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- requesting that, if he is being detained, his family be informed and he be provided with proper medical attention and legal representation.

**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 Pizano, 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**

Procurator General:

Dr.Jaime Bernal Cuellar  
Procurador General de la Nación  
Procuraduría General  
Edificio Banco Ganadero  
Carrera 5, No. 15-80  
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

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

**Faxes:+ 57 1 342 9723 / 281 7531 / 284 0472**

**Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación / Dear Dr.Bernal**

**COPIES TO:**

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 21 April 1998.