

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 458/91 (AMR 23/73/91, 23 December 1991) - Fear of "disappearance"

COLOMBIA: Robinson LUSITANTE MENDUA

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Amnesty International has learned that Robinson Lusitante has been released.

Robinson Lusitante was detained by members of the Colombian armed forces on 14 December 1991 in the municipality of Valle del Guamuez, Putumayo department. He was reportedly seized by the military to be used as a guide in an area where the army has been involved in counter-guerrilla activity.

Amnesty International has received several reports of members of rural communities being seized by the army in order to employ them as "guides" in areas of high guerrilla activity. The "guides" are often required to carry heavy equipment for troops and lead the military patrol in their march to suspected guerrilla zones. They are sometimes killed in ensuing armed confrontations or by the soldiers if they are suspected of being "guerrilla sympathisers".

According to the information received, the whereabouts of Robinson Lusitante were established following a request by the Procurator General's office, Procuraduría General de la Nación to the Regional Procurator's office of Putumayo, Procuraduría Departamental to do whatever they could to find Robinson Lusitante. In a letter to Amnesty International, a lawyer's association connected with the case stated,

"We believe that the international urgent action was responsible for Robinson Lusitante's reappearing alive ... we would like to thank Amnesty International for all its work on this case".

*"Creemos que la acción urgente internacional sirvió en este caso para que Robinson Lusitante apareciera con vida ... queremos agradecerle todos los esfuerzos de Amnistía sobre este caso".*

Many thanks to all those who sent appeals on behalf of Robinson Lusitante.