

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 58/94 Extrajudicial Execution / Death Threats 17 February 1994

COLOMBIA Two leaders of community support group for local unemployed:

 Germán de Jesús AVILA DUQUE, aged 44, tradesman
Arley QUINOÑEZ

Amnesty International has learned of the killing of Germán de Jesús Avila Duque on 1 February 1994 in the town of Orito, Putumayo department, reportedly by agents of the National Police. Amnesty International is now also concerned for the safety of his colleague Arley Quiñonez, who has received death threats.

Sources state that at 8.30 pm on 1 February, Germán de Jesús Avila Duque was shot dead in a street leading to the Colombia district of Orito by two armed men, who then fled on a motorcycle. Eye-witnesses stated that they recognized the killers, who were in civilian dress, as police agents and named one of them. Subsequent to the killing, Arley Quiñonez has been threatened that she will be the next target and there is serious concern for her safety.

Both Germán de Jesús Avila and Arley Quiñonez have been active in the community as leaders of a local organization for the unemployed, CORDOVIP, (*Corporación de Desempleados de Oficios Varios*), Germán de Jesús Avila as Secretary and Arley Quiñonez as President.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years widespread and systematic human rights violations have occurred in Colombia, including extrajudicial executions, "disappearance", torture and arbitrary arrest. Particular targets have been members of left-wing parties, trades union and community 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. On the basis of available evidence, Amnesty International concludes that many such abuses are carried out by members of the Colombian armed forces or civilians working under their command or with their support.

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

- expressing concern at the killing of Germán de Jesús Avila Duque on 1 February 1994, reportedly by national police agents;
- urging that there be an immediate and thorough investigation into the killing, the results of which should be made public and those found responsible brought to justice;
- urging that, taking into account the killing of Germán de Jesús Avila Duque, there also be a thorough inquiry into the death threats against Arley Quiñonez, the results of which should be made public;
- urging that the government take all possible measures to protect the lives of those working for CORDOVIP and all community workers, so that they can carry out their lawful activities without fear for their lives.

APPEALS TO

- 1) President of Colombia:
Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo

Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño
 Santa Fe 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 Fe de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogotá, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 284 0472
Salutation:Sr. Procurador de la Nación/Dear Dr. Arrieta

3) Advocate for the People:
 Dr. Jaime Córdoba Triviño
 Defensor del Pueblo
 Defensoría del Pueblo
 Calle 35 No. 7-25 piso 5
 Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams:Defensor del Pueblo Trivino, Defensoria del Pueblo, Bogota, Colombia
Faxes:+ 57 1 288 6683
Salutation: Estimado Dr Triviño/Dear Dr. Triviño

4) Governor of Putumayo department:
 Sr. Segundo Salvador Lasso Gómez
 Gobernador del Departamento de Putumayo
 Gobernación de Putumayo
 Mocoa, Putumayo, Colombia
Telegrams:Gobernador Lasso Gomez, Gobernador Departamento de Putumayo
Mocoa, Putumayo, Colombia
Salutation: Estimado Sr. Lasso Gómez/Dear Mr Gómez

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Andean Commission of Jurists
 Comisión Andina de Juristas
 AA 58533
 Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

2) Human Rights and Educational Organization
 Señores
 CINEP
 AA 25916
 Santa Fe 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 31 March 1994.