

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

**AI Index: AMR 23/37/92**

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**UA 213/92 Fear of Torture/"Disappearance"**

**25 June 1992**

**COLOMBIA: Gabriel FLOREZ OVIEDO, peasant leader and human rights activist and two other men (names unknown)**

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Amnesty International is concerned about reports of the detention of peasant leader and human rights activist Gabriel Flórez Oviedo and two other men by an army patrol in the hamlet of Montebello, in the conflict-torn Magdalena Medio region of Colombia in circumstances suggesting they are at serious risk of torture, extrajudicial execution or "disappearance".

Gabriel Flórez, a regional leader of the Colombian National Peasants' Association, Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos, and member of the Chucurí Human Rights Corporation, Corporación Chucureña de Derechos Humanos, was detained together with two other peasants (whose first names are believed to be Pedro and Salomon), at 7 am on 22 June 1992 in the locality of Montebello, municipality of San Vicente de Chucurí, department of Santander. According to reports, an army patrol arrived in the village of Montebello and took Gabriel Flórez out of his house by force and drove him and the other two peasants away in a tarpaulin-covered army truck. Relatives of the detained men and members of ANUC went to the local army base where officials denied they were in custody. The whereabouts of the three men remains unknown.

Gabriel Flórez was previously detained for several days by the Colombian army in September 1990 during which time he was repeatedly tortured (UA 367/90, AMR 23/42/90, 14 September 1990). Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Gabriel Flórez and the two other men.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The largely rural area of the Magdalena Medio in central Colombia has been a focus of political violence for several years following the emergence of guerrilla groups in the 1960s and subsequent militarization of the region during the 1980s. The regional human rights committee, Comité Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, (CREDHOS), has expressed serious concern about the recent escalation of human rights abuses, including torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance" committed by the Colombian army, police and paramilitary organizations working with them, against members of the civilian population in the area.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern at the unacknowledged detention of Gabriel Flórez and

two other peasants, by an army patrol in Montebello, Santander department on 22 June 1992;

- urging that they be immediately released unless charged with a recognizably criminal offence;

- urging that they be humanely treated while in custody and that they be allowed full access to family and lawyers.

Page 2 of UA 213/92

**APPEALS TO**

1) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo      **Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente /**  
Presidente de la República                      **Dear President Gaviria**  
Palacio de Nariño  
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: President Gaviria, Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 44281 PALP CO**  
**Faxes: + 57 1 286 3066; + 57 1 286 7324; + 57 1 287 7937**

2) Procurator General:

Dr Carlos Gustavo Arrieta Padilla              **Sr. Procurador de la Nación /**  
Procurador General de la Nación              **Dear Dr. Arrieta**  
Edificio Banco Ganadero  
Carrera 5, No. 15-80  
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Procurator General Arrieta, Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO, 41213 PGNDP CO**  
**Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472**

3) Minister of Defence:

Dr Rafael Pardo Rueda                              **Sr. Ministro /**  
Ministro de Defensa Nacional                      **Dear Minister**  
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52  
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Defensa Pardo Rueda, Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO, 44561 CFAC CO**  
**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

4) Army Commander:

Brigadier General Fernando Tapias              **Sr. Brigadier General /**  
Brigada Móvil No 2                                      **Dear Sir**  
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52  
Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegrams: Comandante Brigada Movil No 2, Ministerio de Defensa Nacional,**  
**Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO, 44561 CFAC CO**  
**Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Human Rights Group:

Señores

CSPP

AA 22803

Santa Fe de Bogotá

Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia in your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 August 1992.