

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Possible Extrajudicial Executions

15 July 1991

**COLOMBIA: Libardo GONZALEZ
Marly GONZALEZ (f)
Eliécer MERCADO**

Amnesty International is concerned at the killings of Libardo González, his sister Marly González, and Eliécer Mercado in the small town of Pueblo Bello, municipality of Turbo, in Antioquia department's Urabá region, in circumstances suggesting that they may have been victims of extrajudicial execution.

On 29 June 1991, Libardo González was reportedly killed in Pueblo Bello by four armed civilians, three men and a woman, after being captured by them and tied up. On 1 July 1991, during the wake (velorio) that was taking place at the family home before burial, Libardo González' sister, Marly González, was taken away. Her body was later found nearby.

On 6 July 1991, three armed men in civilian clothes abducted Eliécer Mercado from Pueblo Bello and took him away in the direction of the road that goes to San Pedro de Urabá. His body was later found nearby.

All three are relatives of two of the 43 people who "disappeared" from Pueblo Bello on 14 January 1990 - Libardo and Marly González are related to Jorge Arturo Castro Galindo, and Eliécer Mercado is related to Pedro Antonio Mercado Montes. The 43 were abducted by about 40 armed men, some in military uniform, others in plain clothes, and taken away in the direction of the local army battalion at San Pedro de Urabá. In April 1990, some 24 bodies showing signs of torture and many with bullets in the head were found at "Las Tangas" ranch in Valencia, Córdoba department. The ranch owner had previously been implicated, together with members of the Colombian army, in a series of massacres in Urabá and the department of Córdoba in 1988. Six of the bodies were identified as being from the group of 43. However, despite evidence of the identity of those responsible for the abductions and killings, official investigations have so far not led to their arrest and prosecution.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years Amnesty International has received an increasing number of reports of human rights violations in Colombia, including extrajudicial executions. Principal targets have been people associated with trade unions, civic community movements and legal left-wing parties. The majority of abuses have been attributed by Colombian authorities to civilian "death squads", which it claims it is unable to control. However, independent investigations, including judicial inquiries have concluded that many such groups operate under the command or with the support of the Colombian security forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the killings of Libardo González, Marly González and Eliécer Mercado in Pueblo Bello in circumstances suggesting they may have been victims of extrajudicial execution;
- urging that there be an immediate inquiry into their deaths, the results of which should be made public;

- expressing concern at the fact that all three are relatives of two of the 43 people who "disappeared" from Pueblo Bello on 14 January 1990 and urging that all possible measures be taken to protect the lives of the remaining relatives of the 43.

APPEALS TO:

Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo
 (Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente)
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño
 Bogotá D.E., Colombia
Telegrams: Presidente Gaviria, Bogota, Colombia
Telexes: 44281 PALP CO
Faxes: + 57 1 283 3066; + 57 1 287 7937
+ 57 1 286 7324

Dr Gustavo Arrieta Padilla
 (Salutation: Sr. Procurador General de la Nación)
 Procurador General de la Nación
 Procuraduría General
 Edificio Banco Ganadero
 Carrera 5, No. 15-80
 Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Procurador General Arrieta, Bogota, Colombia
Telexes: 41224 PRGEN CO; 41213 PGNDP CO
Faxes: + 57 1 284 0472

General Oscar Botero Restrepo
 (Salutation: Sr. General)
 Ministro de Defensa Nacional
 Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
 Avenida Eldorado - Carrera 52
 Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Bogota, Colombia
Telexes: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO
Faxes: + 57 1 222 1874

Tte Coronel Alfonso Ernesto Arteaga Arteaga
 (Salutation: Sr. Tte Coronel)
 Comandante del Batallón Voltígeros
 Carepa
 Urabá
 Antioquia, Colombia
Telegrams: Comandante Batallón Voltígeros, Carepa,
Antioquia, Colombia

COPIES TO:

Association of Relatives of the "Disappeared":
 Señores
 (Salutation: Señores)
 ASFADDES
 A.A. 011446
 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 26 August 1991.