

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 246/92 Fear of "Disappearance"/Torture

30 July 1992

COLOMBIA: Manuel CASTILLO RUISECO, political activist, businessman

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Amnesty International is concerned for the physical safety of Manuel Castillo Ruiseco, who has not been seen since 16 July 1992, when he was reportedly detained by four individuals in Santa Fe de Bogotá.

According to eye-witnesses, Manuel Castillo was detained close to his home, in the Perseverancia district of Bogotá by three armed men and a woman in plain clothes. His shouts for help reportedly attracted police agents from the nearby Fifth Police Station, V Estación de Policía, who appeared to be about to intervene, but stopped when they were shown some form of identification by the assailants. The police agents then reportedly assisted the detention of Manuel Castillo, who was forced into a vehicle and driven to an unknown destination. His detention has been denounced to the authorities. His whereabouts remain unknown and there is serious concern for his safety.

Manuel Castillo Ruiseco is a left-wing political activist and businessman. He had reportedly been the victim of threats and harassment for some time previous to his detention.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In September 1991 the Procurator General's office produced an official report which stated that more than 2,300 complaints had been lodged against the army and police in the last two years for human rights violations, including "disappearance", torture and extrajudicial execution. The report said that a significant number of the victims were members of legal left-wing opposition groups. President César Gaviria Trujillo, on presenting the report, stated:

*"No puede el Gobierno desconocer la gravedad de las acusaciones que se hacen en forma reiterada y masiva contra sus agentes, ni ignorar hasta que punto reina la impunidad por violación de derechos humanos."*

*"The government cannot fail to recognise the seriousness of the accusations made constantly and on a massive scale against its agents, nor ignore the extent of impunity in cases of human rights violations".*

However, despite the government's declared commitment to uphold respect for human rights, members of the Colombian armed and security forces continue to commit serious abuses, including torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance" with virtual impunity.

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

- expressing concern for the physical safety of Manuel Castillo Ruiseco, who has not been seen since 16 July 1992 and requesting that there be an immediate investigation into his whereabouts;
- to the Commander of the 5th Police Station, requesting their report of the detention of Manuel Castillo Ruiseco and the identity of those responsible;
- urging that if in detention, Manuel Castillo Ruiseco be humanely treated and allowed access to a lawyer and to relatives;
- urging that if he is in detention, he be released unless charged with a recognizable criminal offence and brought before a competent court;

#### 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**  
**Telex: 44281 PALP CO**  
**Fax: + 57 1 286 3066 / 286 7324 / 287 7937**

**Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Gaviria**

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2) Director General of the Police  
Mayor Miguel Antonio Gómez Padilla  
Director General de la Policía Nacional  
Tr. 45, No. 40-11  
Santa Fe de Bogotá  
Colombia  
**Telegrams: Dir.-Gen. Policia Nacional Bogota, Colombia**

**Salutation:Sr. Director General/Dear sir**

3) Commander of the Bogotá Police  
Brigadier General Guillermo León Dietes  
Comandante  
Departamento de Policía Metropolitana de Santa Fe de Bogotá  
Tr. 45, No. 40-11  
Santa Fe de Bogotá  
Colombia  
**Telegrams:Comandante Policia Metropolitana, Bogota, Colombia**

**Salutation:Sr. Comandante/Dear sir**

4) Fifth Police Station commander  
Comandante  
V Estación de Policía  
Carrera 1, 18A-96  
Santa Fe de Bogotá  
Colombia  
**Telegrams: Comandante, V Estacion Policia, Bogota, Colombia**

**Salutation:Sr. Comandante/Dear sir**

5) Advocate for the People:  
Dr. Jaime Córdoba Triviño  
Defensor del Pueblo  
Defensoría del Pueblo  
Calle 34, Carrera 5  
Santa Fe de Bogotá  
Colombia  
**Telegrams:Defensor del Pueblo Trivino, c/o Defensoria del Pueblo,  
Bogota, Colombia**  
**Telexes:41224 PRGEN CO or  
41213 PGNDP CO**  
**Faxes:+ 57 1 284 0472**

**Salutation: Estimado Dr Triviño/Dear Dr. Triviño**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Association for Relatives of the "Disappeared"

Señores

ASFADDES

AA 011446

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 10th September 1992.