

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/72/00

15 September 2000

Further information on UA 275/00 (AMR 23/71/00, 8 September 2000) - Fear for Safety

**COLOMBIA** Forcibly displaced civilian communities sheltering in Buga and Tuluá,  
department of Valle del Cauca  
**Displaced community leaders**

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More than half of the forcibly displaced people sheltering in Tuluá have returned to their communities following paramilitary threats. They have been given no protection and Amnesty International believes that they are now in even greater danger.

The Tuluá municipality provided a bus for the displaced communities to return to their land, but apparently no measures have been taken to guarantee their safety, or to confront paramilitaries operating in the region.

Paramilitaries recently ordered forcibly displaced people seeking refuge in Tuluá to return home immediately, or at the latest before 15 September in a leaflet signed by the army-backed paramilitary group *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia - Bloque Calima* (AUC), United Self-Defence Groups of Colombia - Calima Bloc. The leaflet said that military action would be taken against those not leaving.

The armed forces and their paramilitary allies often treat people from internally displaced communities as guerrilla sympathizers or collaborators. As a result, they frequently suffer serious human rights violations.

A number of army-backed paramilitary incursions have been reported in the department of Valle del Cauca since July 1999. As a result, more than 200 people have been killed and several thousand people have been forcibly displaced. Despite repeated international condemnation and a strong security force presence, no decisive action has been taken to confront and dismantle paramilitary groups in the region.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of displaced communities remaining in Tuluá, for those who have returned to their land, and for other displaced communities in the department of Valle del Cauca;
- urging the authorities to take immediate and effective measures to guarantee their safety;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups operating in the department of Valle del Cauca, urging that the results are made public, and that those responsible for supporting and participating in such groups are brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take immediate and decisive action to combat and dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with repeated government commitments and United Nations recommendations.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente Andrés Pastrana Arango

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Faxes:+ 571 286 7434 / 287 7939 / 284 2186 / 289 3377 / 337 1351**  
**Salutation:Dear President / Excmo. Sr Presidente**

Vice-President of the Republic

Señor Vicepresidente Gustavo Bell Lemus  
Alto Consejero Presidencial para asuntos de Derechos Humanos y lucha Contra  
la Corrupción  
Cra. 8 #7-26, Palacio de Nariño, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Fax:+ 571 337 1351**  
**Salutation:Dear Vice-President / Excmo. Sr Vicepresidente**

Minister of Defence

Dr. Luis Fernando Ramírez Acuña  
Ministro de Defensa Nacional, Ministerio de Defensa Nacional  
Avenida Eldorado CAN - Carrera 52, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia  
**Telegram: Ministro de Defensa, Bogotá, Colombia**  
**Telex: 42411 INPRE CO; 44561 CFAC CO**  
**Faxes:+ 571 222 1874**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister / Sr. Ministro**

Governor of Valle del Cauca Department

Señor Juan Fernando Bonilla, Gobernador del Departamento de Valle del Cauca  
Gobernación de Valle del Cauca  
A.A. 8759, Santiago de Cali, Colombia  
**Telegram:Gobernador, Valle del Cauca, Colombia**  
**Faxes:+ 572 885 8813**  
**Salutation:Dear Governor / Sr. Gobernador**

**COPIES TO:**

National Advocate for the People

Sr. Eduardo Cifuentes  
Defensor del Pueblo, Defensoría del Pueblo  
Calle 55, No. 10-32/46, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para Refugiados (ACNUR)  
Calle 114 No.9-01 Edificio Teleport Torre A Oficina 601  
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of Colombia accredited to your country.

**Please also raise these concerns with your own government. Urge your government to publicly condemn the latest threats and to monitor the efforts of the Colombian government to ensure that these threats are fully investigated, those responsible are brought to justice and action is taken to combat paramilitary groups in the region.**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 October 2000.