

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/092/2002

16 August 2002

Further information on UA 106/02 (AMR 23/037/2002, 9 April 2002) and follow-up (AMR 23/058/2002, 20 May 2002) - Fear for safety

COLOMBIA Danilo Rueda (m)  
Maritze Trigos (f)  
Clemencia Correa (f)  
Other members of *Comision Intercongregacional Justicia y Paz*,  
Intercongregational Justice and Peace Commision

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Amnesty International continues to be seriously concerned for the safety of Danilo Rueda and other members of the non-governmental human rights organization *Justicia y Paz*, Justice and Peace, after Danilo Rueda received more written death threats, and armed men again followed him in his car.

On 9 August at 5:15 pm, a condolence card was received at the offices of Justice and Peace in the capital Bogotá. The message accused Danilo Rueda of being a guerrilla collaborator and indicated that they were sorry to learn of Danilo Rueda's death in September ("*Sufragio: Lamentamos el fallecimiento de Danilo Rueda...en septiembre. Muerte defensor de guerrilleros*").

On 30 July, the office of Justice and Peace in Bogotá received another letter addressed to Danilo Rueda. The letter referred to a previous message of 8 July, signed by the army-backed paramilitary group the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, AUC, United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia, reminding Danilo that he remained a military target and accusing him of being a member of or collaborator with a "narco-guerrilla" group ("*Usted es todavía objetivo militar el cargo ser integrante de la narco guerrilla...o auxiliar*").

On 22 July, Danilo Rueda was reportedly followed for 10 minutes on his way to Bogotá airport by two men in a car, one of whom allegedly had a machine gun. On two separate occasions they reportedly swerved in front of Danilo Rueda's car, trying to cut off his path.

The continued death threats raise concern for the safety of all Justice and Peace workers, as the security forces and their paramilitary allies often label human rights defenders as guerrilla collaborators or supporters. This is done so that they can be presented as legitimate targets in the counter-insurgency war. Such accusations are frequently followed by serious human rights violations such as "disappearances", murders or torture. These are generally committed by army-backed paramilitary groups, and also by soldiers. Armed opposition groups have also been responsible for threats against and killings of human rights defenders.

There is no new information on Maritze Trigos and Clemencia Correa.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals in Spanish or your own language:**

- urging the Colombian authorities to take immediate and effective action in agreement with *Justicia y Paz*, Justice and Peace, to protect Danilo Rueda and other members of the organization;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into the threats against Danilo Rueda and other members of Justice and Peace, in consultation with the organization, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- asking them to take immediate and effective action to ensure that members

of Justice and Peace can carry out their legitimate and important work for the defence of human rights in safety;

- calling for a meeting with the vice-president of the republic, Dr. Francisco Santos, in charge of the Human Rights policy of the government to discuss the situation of Justice and Peace and the three requests outlined above;
- reminding the authorities of their obligations to human rights defenders, as laid out in the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Organization of American States Human Rights Defenders in the Americas resolution and in repeated recommendations made to them by the UN;
- urging the government to issue a public statement recognizing the legitimacy of work for respect of the human rights of the civilian population affected by the armed conflict;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with repeated UN recommendations.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez  
Presidente de la República  
Palacio de Nariño  
Carrera 8 No.7-26  
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegram: Presidente de la República, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax: + 57 1 336 2109 /337 1351/284 2186/566 2071**

**Salutation: Dear President Uribe / Excmo. Sr. Presidente Uribe**

Minister of the Interior and Justice

Dr. Fernando Londoño Hoyos  
Ministro del Interior y Justicia, Ministerio del Interior y Justicia,  
Palacio Echeverry, Carrera 8a, No.8-09, piso 2o.,  
Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA

**Telegram: Ministro Interior, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax: + 57 1 562 5298 (if someone answers say "me da tono de fax por favor")**

**Salutation: Dear Sir / Sr. Ministro**

National Advocate for the people

Sr. Eduardo Cifuentes Muñoz, Defensor del Pueblo, Defensoría del Pueblo,  
Calle 55, No. 10-32/46 office 301,  
Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA

**Telegram: National Advocate, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Fax: + 57 1 640 0491**

**Salutation: Dear Mr. Cifuentes Muñoz / Estimado Sr. Cifuentes Muñoz**

**COPIES TO:**

Non-governmental human rights organization

Comisión Intercongregacional De Justicia y Paz  
AA 31.861  
Santafé 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 27 September 2002.