

UA 254/01

"Di.**COLOMBIA Policarpo Emilio MAZO MAZO (m), student activist**

Policarpo Emilio Mazo Mazo, a student at the Universidad Autónoma Latinoamericana in Medellín has "disappeared" after reportedly being arrested by gunmen who identified themselves as state agents. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for his safety.

Policarpo was reportedly arrested at 11am on 21 September. As he was being arrested, eyewitnesses allegedly went to the nearest police station to report the incident. When a policeman questioned the two people who were detaining him, they identified themselves as being state agents from the Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación de la Fiscalía, Technical Investigation Body of the Attorney General's Office. The policeman is then said to have helped them put Policarpo in a car that was parked outside the nearby Candelaria Church. He has not been seen since then.

Policarpo is an active student leader, who in recent months has reportedly received death threats. He was also attacked earlier this year by a paramilitary group. Several student leaders across Colombia have also been threatened for their student activism.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Student activists, Human rights defenders, Trade unionists and other activists have suffered continuous threats and harassment for carrying out their legitimate work, to promote and protect internationally recognized human rights. In the past they have suffered death threats, killings and disappearances at the hands of the security forces and their paramilitary allies. Others have been forced to relocate to another region or even leave the country in fear for their lives. Guerilla forces have also threatened or killed those they consider to be army or paramilitary collaborators.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Policarpo Emilio Mazo Mazo, who has not been seen since 21 September and urge the authorities to take all measures necessary to establish his whereabouts;
- urging that full and impartial investigations are undertaken into the "disappearance", for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to protect other activists and human rights defenders in Medellín, as deemed appropriate by those at risk;
- urging the government to adhere to its obligations to protect activists as set out by the United Nations and Organization of American States;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups operating in Medellín, and for members of the security forces responsible for cooperating and operating in unison with these groups to be brought to justice;
- calling for decisive action to combat and dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with repeated UN recommendations and government commitments.

APEALS 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

Telegram: Presidente, Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 566-2071

Salutation: Dear President / Excmo. Sr. Presidente

Minister of Interior

Dr. Armando Estrada Villa, Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior, Palacio Echeverry, Carrera 8a , No8-09 piso 2
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams:Ministro Interior, Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes:+ 57 1 562 52 98 /562 98 90

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio,
Fiscal General de la Nación, Fiscalía General de la Nación,
Diagonal 22B 5201, Apartado Aéreo 29855, Santafé de Bogotá
COLOMBIA

Telegrams:Fiscal General, Bogotá, Colombia

**Faxes:+ 571 570 2022 (If the call is answered, say "Fax, por favor" and wait
for the signal.)**

Salutation: Estimado Dr. / Dear Dr. Gómez Méndez

COPIES TO:

Non-governmental human rights organization

CSPP

Fundación Comité de Solidaridad con los Presos Políticos

Av. Jiménez No 8 - 49 Of.1001

AA 22803

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 21 November 2001.