

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/041/2005

09 December 2005

Further Information on 255/04 (AMR 23/041/2004, 25 August 2004) Fear for safety

COLOMBIA

Lilia Solano (f), academic and human rights defender

New Name:

Esteban Góngora Solano (m), aged 18, Lilia's son
Other family members and colleagues

On 4 December, armed intruders robbed the Bogotá home of Lilia Solano, the director of the non-governmental human rights organization Justice and Life Project, *Proyecto Justicia y Vida*, and member of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes, *Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado*. The intruders allegedly stole documents concerning human rights violations in Colombia and two mobile phones which contained all of Lilia's contacts. They reportedly also threatened to kill Lilia's son during the robbery.

According to reports, at 5:30pm Lilia's eighteen-year-old son, Esteban Góngora Solano, was alone at home lying in his bed when a man who identified himself as a policeman pointed a gun at his head and told him not to move or he would be shot. He reportedly covered Esteban's head and tied him up, although Esteban was able to make out the voices of two men and one woman. There was allegedly no sign of forced entry.

The intruders searched the entire house and stole Lilia's computer hard drive which contained information about her work as a human rights defender as well as other valuables and US\$100 in cash. They also took documents about human rights violations in Colombia and the two mobile phones. Other documents with information related to Lilia's activities as a human right defender and social activist, which were left in the house, were also searched.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lilia Solano is an academic working in the Faculty of Law, Political and Social Sciences in the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Colombian National University) in the capital, Bogotá. In the past she helped organize a series of conferences in the Faculty on the history of violence in Colombia and on the government's process of dialogue with army-backed paramilitaries. She is also a candidate for the opposition party, *Frente Social y Político*, Political and Social Front, in the next year's congressional elections to be held in March.

Due to her political and human rights activities Lilia Solana had received telephone threats in the past. Fearing for her safety and to lower her profile, she was forced to leave Colombia in December 2004. She returned in February this year. Since then she has not received direct threats, although on several occasions her office has allegedly been under surveillance by unidentified men.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Lilia Solano, other members of her family, and her colleagues, following the break-in at her home;
- urging the authorities to offer them effective protection, in line with her wishes, so that Lilia can carry on her legitimate and important work in defence of human rights;

- calling for a full and impartial investigation into the break-in, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;

- urging the government to fully implement the principles of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño

Carrera 8 No.7-2

Bogotá

Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 337 5890

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

Vice-President

Vicepresidente de la República de Colombia

Dr. Francisco Santos Calderón

Vicepresidencia

Carrera 8A No 5-57

Bogotá

Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 565 7682

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Vicepresidente/ Dear Vice-President

Attorney General

Dr. Mario Germán Iguarán

Fiscal General de la Nación

Fiscalía General de la Nación

Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite)

Bogotá

Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 570 2000 (a message in Spanish will ask you to enter extension 2017)

Salutation: Estimado Sr. Germán/ Dear Mr. Germán

COPIES TO:

Proyecto Justicia y Vida

Carrera 28 No46/16

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 20 January 2006.