

UA 206/01

Fear for safety/Possible extrajudicialexecution.

COLOMBIA Members of the Multi-ethnic People's Movement of Tumaco Other popular activists

Killed: Pepe ZABALA (m)

Angela ANDRADE (f)

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Paramilitary gunmen have reportedly killed two members of an NGO campaigning for the rights of the various ethnic minority groups in Nariño Department, and other activists in the region are believed to be in danger.

Pepe Zabala and Angela Andrade were killed on 6 August, in the Aguaclara district of the municipality of Tumaco. Both were members of the *Movimiento Popular Multietnico De La Vertiente Del Pacífico Nariñense*, Multi-ethnic People's Movement of the Nariño Pacific Coast.

Paramilitaries backed by the security forces began operating in Tumaco in September 2000, and began threatening to kill *Movimiento Popular* members shortly afterwards. Several other activists have faced death threats or been killed by paramilitaries. The security forces have reportedly captured a number of paramilitaries, and there is a heavy military presence in the region, but paramilitary groups have managed to continue operating.

The *Movimiento Popular* had appealed to the Ministry of the Interior for protection, because of the death threats. The Ministry had provided mobile telephones for members to inform the authorities if they were attacked, but it is clear that the government must take more concrete action to protect them and other activists in Tumaco, and bring those responsible for the death threats and killings to justice. They must confront and dismantle paramilitary groups operating in the region, investigate their possible links with the security forces and bring those members of the security forces who have assisted paramilitary activity to justice.

Elsewhere in Tumaco, paramilitaries are reported to have entered the community of Espriella during the night of 13 and 14 August, despite the fact that the Colombian armed forces maintain a heavy presence in the area.

The paramilitaries are illegal armed groups working with clandestine support and direction from members of the armed forces. They have carried out serious human rights violations against the civilian population in the course of operations against left-wing guerilla groups, who have been fighting the government for over 30 years. The largest guerilla organisation is the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. Both sides have killed civilians whom they accuse of collaborating with the enemy.

Civilians in Tumaco and the nearby municipality of Barbacoas have come under attack by FARC. On 8 July, around five inhabitants of Barbacoas were killed by gunmen, reportedly FARC members. The population are also under threat from paramilitaries, who have recently threatened to raid the municipality. Around 500 paramilitaries are reportedly in Barbacoas already.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Colombian army and security forces and their paramilitary allies commit serious human rights violations with virtual impunity. In the last five years several thousand civilians have been killed by paramilitary groups. The government suspended the constitutional legal base for the formation of paramilitary organizations and issued directives to the armed forces to combat and disband such groups in 1989, yet they continue to work with the support of the security forces in many areas of the country.

Guerrilla forces have also committed serious violations of international humanitarian law, including executions of those they accuse of being security force or paramilitary force collaborators.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of members of the Multi-ethnic People's Movement and other popular activists in Tumaco
- calling for a full, independent and impartial investigation into the killings of Angela Andrade and Pepe Zabala reportedly by paramilitaries, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to do everything necessary to guarantee the safety of the civilian population in this region;
- urging them to take decisive measures to guarantee the safety of the civilian population of La Espriella and the municipality of Barbacoas, where paramilitary forces are reportedly converging;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups operating in the department of Nariño, urging that the results are made public and those found responsible for supporting and participating in such groups are brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and United Nations recommendations.

**APPEALS TO:**

Commander of the Marine Infantry Training Base BEIM2

Lieutenant Colonel Nicolás Montenegro Montenegro  
 Commander of BEIM 2 (Base de Entrenamiento de Infantería de Marina  
 Apostadero Naval  
 Tumaco, Nariño

**Telegrams: Comandante BEIM2, Tumaco, Colombia**

**Telefax: + 57 927 272 821**

**Salutation: Sr Comandante.**

Minister of Interior

Sr. Armando Estrada Villa  
 Ministro del Interior  
 Ministerio del Interior  
 Palacio Echeverry  
 Carrera 8a, No.8-09, piso 2o.  
 Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

**Telegrams: Ministro Interior, Bogotá, Colombia**

**Faxes:+ 57 1 341 9583 / 334 3960 / 286 8025 / 342 3201 / 281 5884**

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

Minister of Defence

Dr. Gustavo Bell

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**  
**Fax: + 57 1 286 4126 / 281 1213 / 222 1874**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister / Sr. Ministro**

**COPIES TO:**

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

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 2001.