

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/95/00

20 November 2000

Further information on UA 340/00 (AM 23/90/00, 6 November 2000) - Fear for Safety / Extrajudicial Executions / possible "disappearances"

COLOMBIA Osvaldo BUITRAGO PRADILLA  
Rodrigo BUITRAGO PRADILLA

new name: Francisco GARCIA (relative of a victim of the May 1998 massacre in Barrancabermeja)

Killed: Francisco Javier CASTRO JAIMES, Luis Arturo PÉREZ OSORIO, Joel Jaime SUAREZ, Ramiro NIÑO ARDILA, Jairo Alonso SUAREZ MORANTES, Carlos Alberto SUAREZ ARDILA, Donato SUAREZ SÁNCHEZ

new name: Hector Alexander WELLS (relative of a victim of the May 1998 massacre in Barrancabermeja)

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The paramilitaries who carried out the 4 November raid on Barrancabermeja are now believed to have been looking for the relative of a victim of the 1998 massacre in the city, who has been campaigning to bring those responsible to justice. He is believed to be named on a death list. Another relative has since been shot dead.

The 50 gunmen, who wore armbands of the paramilitary group *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC), United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia, were reportedly carrying a death list, which included the name of Francisco García. They apparently searched for him in the El Campin district of the city, but could not find his house. Francisco García's son Riqui Nelson García (22), "disappeared" during the 16 May 1998 paramilitary incursion into Barrancabermeja, in which seven people were killed and 25 "disappeared".

Francisco García is a member of the human rights organization *Asociación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos* (ASFADDES), Association of Families of the Detained Disappeared, which has been campaigning to determine the whereabouts of people who "disappeared" in the 1998 incursion, and to bring those responsible for the massacre to justice.

Another relative of a victim of the massacre, Hector Alexander Wells, was killed in his home on 17 November. His brother Roberto Wells Gordillo (23) "disappeared" during the May 1998 incursion.

ASFADDES activist Elizabeth Cañas Cano was shot dead in Barrancabermeja on 11 June 2000. She had been campaigning for justice for her son and brother, who "disappeared" in the May 1998 incursion. (see follow-up on UA 163/00, AMR 23/54/00, 14 July).

The authorities have taken no effective action to combat or dismantle the paramilitary groups that operate in the region, or to bring to justice those members of the security forces who collaborate with them, leaving civilians at risk. ASFADDES members and other human rights defenders, as well as witnesses to human rights violations, have suffered death threats, killings and "disappearances" at the hands of the security forces and their paramilitary allies.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Francisco Garcia, following reports that paramilitaries searched for him during the 4 November raid, and for other relatives of victims of the 1998 Barrancabermeja massacre, following the killing of Hector Alexander Wellls;
- expressing concern for the safety of Osvaldo Buitrago Papilla and his brother Rodrigo, who were reportedly abducted during the 4 November raid, and urging the authorities to do everything possible to find them and secure their immediate release;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into the raid, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice, and urging the authorities to take immediate and decisive action to combat and dismantle paramilitary groups operating in the department of Santander, in line with repeated government commitments and United Nations recommendations;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups operating in the department of Santander, urging that the results are made public, and that those responsible for supporting and participating in such groups are brought to justice;

**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

**Fax: + 57 1 286 7434/287 7939/284 2186/337 1351/289 3377**

**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:+ 57 1 337 1351**

**Salutation: Dear Vice-President / Excmo. Sr Vicepresidente**

Commander of the V Brigade of the Colombian Army

General Martín Orlando Carreño Sandoval  
Comandante de la V Brigada  
Calle 14, Carrera 33  
Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia

**Fax: + 57 76 455051/76 351493**

**Salutation: Sr. General**

**COPIES TO:**

Association for Relatives of the Detained Disappeared

ASFADDES  
AA 011446  
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 1 January 2000.