

PUBLIC

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Fear for

COLOMBIA Wilson BORJA DÍAZ, trade union leader

Wilson Borja Díaz, leader of the *Federación Nacional de Trabajadores al Servicio del Estado* (FENALTRASE), National Federation of State Service Industry Workers, was shot and wounded by gunmen on 15 December. The attack raises serious concerns for his safety and that of other trade union leaders in Colombia.

The gunmen apparently opened fire as Wilson Borja left his home in Bogotá at 6am. Wilson Borja and his two bodyguards were injured, and a street vendor was killed during the attack.

Wilson Borja is also a leading member of the *Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores* (CUT), Trade Union Congress.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For many years the security and armed forces and their paramilitary allies have accused trade unionists, human rights workers, members of legal opposition groups and popular activists of being guerrilla sympathizers or auxiliaries. The people they have accused have frequently been harassed, tortured and killed, often by paramilitaries. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions Annual Survey for 1999 recorded that during the previous year more than 90 trade unionists had been murdered in Colombia.

Amnesty International has documented systematic persecution of trade unionists in Colombia. Seven trade union leaders were shot dead during the 1998 national strike, including CUT vice-president Jorge Ortega Garcia (see UA 274/98, AMR 23/80/98, 21 October 1998, and follow up, AMR 23/90/98, 24 November 1998). None of these crimes has been resolved and those responsible have not been brought to justice.

Guerrilla forces and armed opposition groups have also committed serious violations of international humanitarian law, for example executing those they accuse of being security force or paramilitary collaborators and supporters.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- urging full and impartial investigations into the attack on Wilson Borja, in which he and his two bodyguards were shot and wounded and a street vendor was killed, with the results published and all those responsible brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to do everything deemed appropriate by Wilson Borja and other trade union leaders under threat to guarantee their safety.

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

Telegrams: President Pastrana, Bogota, Colombia

Faxes: + 57 1 286 7434/287 7939/284 2186/289 3377

Salutation: Dear President Pastrana/ Excmo. Sr Presidente

Minister of Interior

Señor Humberto De La Calle
Ministro del Interior, Ministerio del Interior, Palacio Echeverry
Carrera 8a, No.8-09, piso 2o., Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams:Ministro Interior, Bogota, Colombia

Faxes: + 57 1 286 8025

Salutation:Dear Sir / Sr. Ministro

Attorney General

Dr. Alfonso Gómez Méndez,
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:

Human rights organization

CSPP

AA 22803

Bogota

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 31 January 2001.