

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 23/111/2001

2 November 2001

Further information on UA 221/01 (AMR 23/085/01, 5 September 2001) - Fear for Safety

COLOMBIA Pablo Javier Arenales (m)]

José Guillermo Larios (m)] human rights activists

Yaneth Rubio Rodríguez (f)]

New names: Diana Marcela Gallego (f) and her family

Diana Garcia (f)

Other members of REINICIAR

CREDHOS activist Yaneth Rubio Rodríguez fled Colombia on 13 October, in fear for her life. She had received a constant stream of paramilitary death threats. Two senior members of another human rights groups she worked for, REINICIAR, have been threatened, and Amnesty International believes they are in grave danger.

Diana Marcela Gallego, is a lawyer and member of REINICIAR. On 6 September a man reportedly grabbed her in the street and told her, "You'd better be careful, you guerrilla bitch," "*Cuidese guerrillera hija de puta.*"

Later that day, Diana returned home with her husband, human rights activist Luis Alberto Matta, and their son. They apparently saw three men at the public telephone near the gate of their housing development. Diana went into a nearby store, and one of the men reportedly drew a gun, cocked it and handed it to one of his companions. Luis and Diana managed to reach the housing development safely and reported the incident to the the security guard who patrols the housing estate. He reportedly told them he had seen the men on previous days, using the phone.

REINICIAR spokesperson Diana Garcia was reportedly followed by two men when she left the REINICIAR offices on 16 October at 11.30 am. The next day they followed her again, and as she left a public library one of them apparently grabbed her by the arm and said, "You'd better be careful you guerrilla bitch, don't keep doing what you're doing, what's going to happen is that we're going to kill you all," "*cuidese guerrillera hija de puta, no sigan haciendo lo que están haciendo, sino lo que pasa es que las vamos a matar*". The other man reached into his jacket as if to pull out a gun, to show that he was armed. She was reportedly followed again on 24 October, by two men on a motorcycle.

Yaneth Rubio Rodríguez has been forced to flee the country. She had been threatened by the *Grupo de Limpieza - AUC*, the "social cleansing group" of the army-backed paramilitary group *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia. She had suffered constant telephone threats, stalking and death threats in the form of cards offering condolences for her own funeral. Yaneth had already been forced to flee to Bogotá from Barrancabermeja by threats from army-backed paramilitary groups. Amnesty International continues to have serious concerns for the safety of human rights defenders working with CREDHOS in Barrancabermeja. There is no more specific information on Pablo Javier Arenales and José Guillermo Larios.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of REINICIAR members Diana Marcela Gallego and Diana Garcia, who have received death threats;
- calling for an immediate and exhaustive investigation into these threats and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- urging the government to take immediate action to protect Diana Marcela Gallego and Diana Garcia;
- urging the government to fully implement the UN *Declaration on the Rights 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, 9 December 1998;
- calling for the government to fulfill its promise to respect human rights by taking immediate action to combat paramilitary groups, which still operate with impunity;
- urging the government to adhere to the recommendations of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations.

APPEALS TO:Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio
 Fiscalía General de la Nación
 Apartado Aéreo 29855
 Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite)
 Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA
Fax: +57 1 570 2000

Salutation: Dear Dr. / Estimado Dr. Osorio

President

Señor Presidente Andrés Pastrana, Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No. 7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
Telegrams: President Pastrana, Bogotá, Colombia

Telex: 44281 PALP CO

Fax: + 57 1 286 7434/562 9300 / 566 2071

Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Pastrana

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, Bogota, Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 562 5298/ 562 9890

Salutation: Dear Sir / Sr. Ministro

COPIES TO:

Reiniciar
 AA 16284
 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 14 December 2001.