

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 53/001/2005

25 January 2005

Further Information on UA 226/04 (AMR 53/011/2004, 16 July 2004) and follow-up (AMR 53/020/2004, 29 October 2004) - Fear for safety

VENEZUELA **Jorge Barrios (m), aged 15**
 Oneida Barrios (f), mother of Jorge and Rigoberto]
 Eloisa Barrios (f)] brothers and sisters of
 Inés Barrios (f)] Narciso and Luis Barrios
 Elvira Barrios (f)]
 Justina Barrios (f), grandmother of Caudy, Rigoberto and Jorge
 Carolina García (f) wife of Luis Barrios
 Pablo Sólorzano (m)] brothers and sister of
 Beatriz Barrios (f)] Narciso and Luis Barrios
 Juan Barrios (m)]
 Oscar Barrios (m), nephew of Luis Barrios

Killed: Rigoberto Barrios (m), aged 16 (previously given as 'Rigo')
Luis Barrios (m), brother of Narciso Barrios

Another member of the Barrios family, from the town of Guanayen in Aragua State, has been murdered, allegedly by police officers. Amnesty International believes that other members of the family are in grave danger.

Sixteen-year-old Rigoberto Barrios was shot eight times by two men who approached him as he walked with a friend in the Casitas neighbourhood of Guanayen, at approximately 9pm on 9 January. The men were apparently wearing Aragua State police uniform hats and trousers. Rigoberto underwent surgery at the Central Hospital in the state capital, Maracay, but died on 19 January. His attackers had used a shotgun and a revolver, weapons of the type used in the alleged police killing of his uncle, Luis Barrios, in September 2004.

A campaign of intimidation has been waged against the Barrios family ever since December 2003, when an argument between Rigoberto's uncle Narciso Barrios and Aragua State police officers resulted in Narciso's killing a few days later. Amnesty International is unaware of any progress in the investigations into the murders of Narciso and Luis, nor of investigations into complaints made by the family regarding death threats and intimidation by state police officers. Similarly, the organization understands that the Venezuelan authorities have yet to act on the September 2004 request from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights which called for the family to be protected and all the police officers implicated in the threats and killings to be dismissed.

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

- calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the killing of Rigoberto Barrios, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- reiterating your concern for the safety of other members of the Barrios family, who have been continually threatened and harassed by Aragua state police officers;
- urging the authorities to act immediately on the request by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, to provide adequate protection to the Barrios family to guarantee their safety, and dismiss the police officers implicated in the threats and killings;

- asking what progress has been made in the investigations into the murders of Narciso Barrios and Luis Barrios and into incidents of intimidation and threats reported by the family.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General

Fiscal General de la República, Dr. Isaías Rodríguez
Avenida Universidad, Esquina Pele el ojo a Misericordia,
frente a Parque Carabobo, Caracas, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 212 576 44 19

Salutation: Estimado Señor Fiscal General/Dear Attorney General

Human Rights Ombudsman

Defensoría del Pueblo
Dr. Germán Mundaraín
Bellas Artes comienzo Avenida México frente al Ateneo de Caracas
Plaza Morelos
Caracas, VENEZUELA

Fax: + 58 212 575 4467 (if a voice answers, say “tono de fax por favor”)

Email: gmundarain@defensoria.gov.ve

Salutation: Estimado Señor/Dear Sir

Governor of Aragua State

Sr. Gobernador del estado de Aragua
Sr. Didalco Bolívar
Palacio de Gobierno
Avenida de Miranda
Maracay
Estado de Aragua, VENEZUELA

Fax: +58 243 2377002

Salutation: Estimado Señor Gobernador/Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization.

Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Justicia y Paz del Estado Aragua
Calle Negro Primero, Oeste
N 98, frente al
Liceo ‘Valentin Espinal’, Cruce con Av. Ayacucho, Maracay
Estado Aragua, Venezuela

Fax: +58 243 245 7336

and to diplomatic representatives of Venezuela accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 March 2005.