

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 23/24/96

8 May 1996

Further information on UA 295/94 (AMR 23/62/94, 10 August 1994) and follow-ups (AMR 23/66/94, 26 August 1994; AMR 23/46/95, 8 August 1995) - Possible extrajudicial execution / Fear for safety

COLOMBIA Aida Abella (f), opposition politician

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Aida Abella who survived an attempt on her life on 7 May 1996 in Bogotá.

According to information received, at 7.30am Aida Abella was travelling to work when several gunmen opened fire with a bazooka on her armour-plated vehicle on a Bogotá highway. She escaped without injury but at least one person was injured in the attack. The attack is believed to have been carried out by a paramilitary group.

Aida Abella has been subjected to repeated harassment and death threats in recent years. Following this attempt on her life, concern for her safety has further increased. Aida Abella is a member of Bogotá's city council, member of the *Comité Ejecutivo Central del Partido Comunista Colombiano*, National Executive Committee of the Colombian Communist Party (PCC), and is President of the *Unión Patriótica*, UP, Patriotic Union Party.

Both the UP and the PCC have been particular targets for human rights violations, including death threats, politically motivated killings and "disappearances". At the beginning of October 1992 the Advocate for the People, Dr. Jaime Triviño Córdoba, published a report which concluded that the main perpetrators of violence against UP activists were paramilitary groups, members of the security forces and hired gunmen. According to the official report, 717 members of the UP have been killed since the party's creation in 1985. Colombian human rights organizations presently place the figure at over 2,500 activists, including two presidential candidates and several members of the Congress.

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

- calling for immediate measures to guarantee the safety of Aida Abella and members of the *Unión Patriótica* party and other opposition parties, following the attack against Aida Abella on 7 May 1996 in Bogotá, in circumstances suggesting involvement of a paramilitary group;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into the attack, and earlier death threats against Aida Abella, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging immediate steps to dismantle paramilitary groups and bring those responsible for human rights violations to justice. This would be in line with stated governmental commitments on human rights.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of Colombia:

Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Carrera 8 No. 7-26
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams: President Samper Pizano, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 44281 PALP CO

Faxes: + 57 1 289 3377/286 7434

Salutation:Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente/Dear President Samper

2) Attorney General

Dr. Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento

Fiscal General de la Nación

Fiscalia General de la Nación

Calle 35 No. 4-31

Apartado Aéreo 29855

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Telegrams:Fiscal General Valdivieso, Fiscalia General, Bogotá, Colombia

Faxes:+ 57 1 287 0939 or 288 2828

Salutation: Estimado Dr. Valdivieso/Dear Dr. Valdivieso

3) Minister of the Interior

Dr. Horacio Serpa Uribe

Ministro del Interior

Ministerio del Interior

Carrera 8, No.8-09, Piso 2

Santafé de Bogotá, COLOMBIA

Telegrams: Ministro del Interior Serpa, Bogota, Colombia

Faxes:+ 57 1 286 6524 / 286 0053 / 286 0485

Telexes:45406 MINGO CO

Salutation:Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Human rights organization

ANDAS

AA 3511

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 2 July 1996.