

PUBLIC

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UA 318/04 Fear for safety/ Death threats

24 November 2004

COLOMBIA **Claudia Julieta Duque,(f) journalist
Her 10 year old daughter, (name withheld)**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of journalist Claudia Julieta Duque and her family following a recent death threat against her 10 year old daughter. It came two days after Claudia Julieta Duque was placed under the security of the Ministry of Interior's protection programme for journalists, following repeated threats against her in recent years.

At 7:52 pm on 17 November, Claudia Julieta Duque received a telephone call in which an unknown male caller asked if he was speaking to her. He also asked for the name of her daughter before saying: "son of a bitch, I feel sorry for you but we don't have any other option than to kill your daughter, even if you travel in an armoured car, your daughter will suffer, we'll burn her alive, we will scatter her fingers around the place. (*"sapa hijaeputa, me da mucha pena pero usted no nos ha dejado otra salida distinta que matar a su hija, aunque usted ande en carro blindado, su hija va a sufrir, la vamos a quemar viva, le vamos a esparcir los dedos por la casa"*).

As the caller's number was registered on her telephone Claudia Julieta Duque informed the non-governmental organisation (NGO) José Alvear Restrepo' Lawyers' Collective, *Corporación Colectivo de Abogados 'José Alvear Restrepo'* about the threatening phone call. When members of this organization dialled the number, a man who reportedly answered the phone confirmed his address was that of a police station in the capital Bogotá.

Claudia Julieta Duque has written articles on freedom of speech in Colombia. She also works with NGOs such as the 'José Alvear Restrepo' Lawyers' Collective where she has been researching the case of Colombian comedian and journalist, Jaime Garzón, who was killed on 13 August 1999. Criminal proceedings found paramilitary leader Carlos Castaño guilty of the crime and implicated several members of the security forces in the killing. As a result of threats, Claudia Julieta Duque was forced to temporarily leave the country in 2001.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Colombia is one of the countries with the highest levels of violence against journalists. They are frequently threatened and killed by armed groups in Colombia's internal conflict who accuse them of collaborating with their enemies.

Journalists and human rights defenders who have campaigned for justice in cases of human rights violations committed by the security forces or their paramilitaries allies have often been subject to serious human rights violations themselves.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Claudia Julieta Duque and her family following a death threat against her 10 year old daughter on 17 November 2004;
- urging the authorities to ensure that all measures deemed appropriate by them are taken to guarantee their safety;
- calling for full and impartial investigations into the threats against Claudia Julieta Duque and her daughter, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- calling for the Ministry of Interior's protection programme for journalists to be adequately resourced in order to provide more effective protection to journalists.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño

Carrera 8 No.7-26

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 337 5890/342 0592

Salutation: Dear President Uribe/ Excmo. Sr. Presidente Uribe

Minister of the Interior and Justice

Sr. Sabas Pretelt de la Vega,

Ministro del Interior y de Justicia

Ministerio del Interior

Av. Jiménez No 8-89

Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 560 4630

Salutation: Dear Sir / Sr. Ministro

Attorney General

Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio,

Fiscal General de la Nación

Fiscalía General de la Nación

Diagonal 22B 52-01 (Ciudad Salite)

Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: + 57 1 570 2000 (you will hear a message in Spanish asking you to enter extension 2017)

Salutation: Dear Dr. Osorio / Estimado Dr. Osorio

COPIES TO:

'José Alvear Restrepo' Lawyers' Collective

Corporación Colectivo de Abogados 'José Alvear Restrepo',

AA 33035

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 5 January 2005