

Institution:	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
Title/Style of Cause:	Arauca Social Leaders v. Colombia
Doc. Type:	Decision on Precautionary Measures
Dated:	29 July 2002
Citation:	Arauca Social Leaders v. Colombia, Inter-Am. C.H.R., OEA/Ser.L/V/II.117, doc. 1 rev. 1, Ch. III, para. 38 (2002)

Terms of Use:	Your use of this document constitutes your consent to the Terms and Conditions found at <a href="http://www.worldcourts.com/index/eng/terms.htm">www.worldcourts.com/index/eng/terms.htm</a>
---------------	--

---

38. On July 29, 2002 the Commission granted precautionary measures on behalf of 14 social leaders from the department of Arauca. A violent paramilitary offensive was launched in September 2001 in the municipalities of Tame, Puerto Rondón, and Cravo Norte. This situation led to a public statement by the United Nations, mobilization of social sectors in Arauca, and finally a commitment signed on March 4, 2002 with the national government, which pledged to ensure law enforcement presence. The petitioners alleged that the persons named as beneficiaries in the request played a key role in the mobilization and the signature of this agreement and that some of them were on a list of “military targets” found by the Attorney General’s Office in the possession of paramilitary leader Jesús Emiro Pereira, who was captured in December 2001. The petitioners feel that because of their high profile as spokespeople for their communities, these social leaders are at serious risk of being attacked by the AUC. They had learned that a group of assassins had been hired by the AUC to kill the social, political, and union leaders and communicators on the list. On November 8, 2002, human rights defender José Rusbell Lara was killed; he was a member of the Joel Sierra Regional Human Rights Committee and was a beneficiary of the precautionary measures. In a press release, the IACHR condemned the killing, which occurred in the municipal capital of Tame, and urged the State to exhaustively investigate this crime, prosecute and punish the perpetrators, and ensure that the rest of the human rights defenders covered by the Commission’s request receive due protection (See press release 45/02).