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Institution:	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
Title/Style of Cause:	Enrique Medrano, Juan Berrío, Sandy Juliet Martínez Copete, Yoinis Gutiérrez Mena, Sandra Gutiérrez Mena and Yesenia Berrío Mena v. Panama
Doc. Type:	Decision on Precautionary Measures
Dated:	25 April 2003
Citation:	Medrano v. Panama, Inter-Am. C.H.R., OEA/Ser.L/V/II.118, doc. 5 rev. 2, Ch. III, para. 58 (2003)
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58. On April 25, 2003, the Commission granted precautionary measures on behalf of Enrique Medrano, Juan Berrío, and the girls Sandy Juliet Martínez Copete, Yoinis Gutiérrez Mena, Sandra Gutiérrez Mena and Yesenia Berrío Mena. The information available indicates that in the context of an operation to repatriate Afro-descendants of Colombian origin who were living in the locality of Punusa, Boca de Cupe, carried out April 18, 19, and 20, 2003, Enrique Medrano and Juan Berrío were detained by the Panamanian authorities, without any further immediate notice of their whereabouts or their personal security or physical integrity. The girls Sandy Juliet Martínez Copete, Yoinis Gutiérrez Mena, Sandra Gutiérrez Mena, and Yesenia Berrío Mena had been separated from their families when the repatriation occurred. In view of the situation, the IACHR asked the Panamanian State to present information on the whereabouts of Magdalena Medrano and Juan Berrío, and on the measures adopted to ensure their personal integrity. In terms of the situation of the girls, it asked that the State determine their whereabouts, protect their security and health, and ensure that they are reunited with their families. In addition, the IACHR called on Panama to respect the right of non-refoulement of Colombian nationals in Panama, in the communities of Boca de Cupe, Jaqué Matugantí, Puerto Obaldía, and Punusa, in the Darién region of Panama, in keeping with international law, and to take steps to prevent their expulsion from Panamanian territory without the guarantees established at Articles 8, 22, and 25 of the American Convention. After the precautionary measures were issued, the petitioners reported that the minor Yesenia Berrío had been reunited with her parents on May 13, 2003, and that Sandra Gutiérrez Mena was of age; that information was immediately forwarded to the State. In response, the State reported that Yoinis Gutiérrez and Sandy Martínez were in Boca de Cupe, in the custody of their families. In addition, the parties submitted information on the situation of Enrique Medrano and Juan Berrío. On October 24, 2003, the IACHR held a working meeting with representatives of the State in which information was received on the situation of the communities of Afro-Colombian origin in the Panamanian Darien, and on the measures designed to verify future repatriations. In view of the information provided by the State, on October 20, 2003, the Commission decided to lift the precautionary measures.