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Institution: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
Title/Style of Cause: Kankuamo Indigenous People v. Colombia
Doc. Type: Decision on Precautionary Measures
Dated: 24 September 2003
Citation: Kankuamo Indigenous People v. Colombia, Inter-Am. C.H.R.,
OEA/Ser.L/V/II.118, doc. 5 rev. 2, Ch. III, para. 27 (2003)

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27. On September 24, 2003, the Commission granted precautionary measures on behalf of the Kankuamo indigenous people, who live in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. The information available indicates that in the first half of 2003, 44 Kankuamo were assassinated. On August 11, 2003, Andrés Ariza Mendiola was assassinated by the AUC in a paramilitary incursion on his farm; on August 18, 2003, Alcides Arias Maestre and Robinson Villazón were assassinated by the AUC in a paramilitary incursion in the district (corregimiento) of Los Haticos; and on August 29, 2003, the corpse of Ever de Jesús Montero was found with his face disfigured, dressed in camouflage, and presented to the media as a member of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional killed in combat with the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC). In addition, there were displacements of the indigenous population, as a result of the constant acts of violence against the community. In view of the situation, the IACHR asked the Colombian State to adopt the measures needed to safeguard the life and personal integrity of the members of the Kankuamo people, respecting their cultural identity and protecting the special relationship they have with their territory; to offer emergency attention to the victims of forced displacement; and to adopt the measures needed to investigate judicially the acts of violence and threats against the beneficiary community. On October 30, 2003, the IACHR issued a press release expressing its serious concern over the situation of the Kankuamo people. The Commission has continued to receive information about the situation of the persons protected.