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Institution:	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
Title/Style of Cause:	Wiwa Indigenous People v. Colombia
Doc. Type:	Decision on Precautionary Measures
Dated:	4 February 2005
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14. On February 4, 2005, the IACHR granted precautionary measures in favor of the members of the Wiwa indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta. The information available indicates that during the past two years, these indigenous people have suffered a series of violent acts by paramilitaries, including the murder of approximately 50 indigenous leaders, the forced displacement of more than 800 individuals, and a deteriorating humanitarian situation in the communities of La Laguna, El Limón, Marokazo, Dudka, Linda, and Potrerito. It is reported that on January 19, 2005, Angel Milciades Loperena Díaz, the General Treasurer of the Wiwa Yugumaiun Bukuanarúa Tayrona Organization, was murdered, along with his brother Darío Loperena, a community schoolteacher, in San Juan del Cesar (La Guajira department). Responsibility for the killings was attributed to the Northern Bloc of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia under the command of “Jorge 40.” Given the risks facing the beneficiaries, the Commission asked the Colombian State to adopt the measures necessary to protect the lives and personal integrity of the members of the Wiwa People of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta, respecting their cultural identity and protecting the special relationship they enjoy with their lands, in accordance with the obligations entered into by the State. The Commission also asked the State to provide humanitarian assistance to the victims of the displacements and food crises, in particular the indigenous people’s minor children, to agree on collective protection measures, including the presence of a community defender, with the beneficiaries through their representative organizations Wiwa Yugumaiun Bukuanarúa Tayrona OBYBT, the Gonabindua Tayrona Organization, and the petitioners, and to take the steps necessary to end the acts of violence and threats carried out against the beneficiary community. The Commission continues to monitor the situation of the beneficiaries.