

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AT RISK

On 2 October, neighbours informed Luz Marina Arteaga, a defender for the rights of rural communities in the Meta department, in central Colombia, that her house is under continuous surveillance from unknown men. Luz Marina was forced to leave her home 7 months ago due to a death threat received from the “Rastrojo” paramilitary group. On 20 April 2019, she requested protection from the National Protection Unit (UNP) but is yet to receive it. She would like to return home, but fears for her life due to the recent events. We urge the UNP to grant protection measures to Luz Marina, and ensure her safety if she returns home.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Mr. Pablo Elias Gonzalez Mongui
UNP Director
Carrera 63 # 14 – 97 / Primer Piso Puente Aranda, Bogotá D.C., Colombia.
e-mail: paegon1@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Pablo Elías Gonzalez

I am writing regarding the security incidents affecting Human Rights Defender Luz Marina Arteaga in the village “El Porvenir,” Meta. On 16 April 2019, Luz Marina received a telephone death threat from the commander of the paramilitary group known as “Los Rastrojos”. She requested protection measures from the National Protection Unit but never received any, so she was forced to leave her home. On 2 October, she was warned that unknown men had her house under surveillance and that they are asking for her whereabouts in the area.

Due to the high risk of the threat and persecution for Luz Marina in her home town, she was forced to leave and has been unable to return.

We urge you to grant Luz Marina Arteaga the protection measures she requested, and to coordinate with the appropriate authorities to ensure an enabling environment so that she can return and continue her human rights work.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Luz Marina Arteaga is part of the association “Asociación de campesinos e indígenas sin tierra, víctimas del conflicto de la inspección El Porvenir y Matarratón del municipio de Puerto Gaitan” (Association of landless *campesinos* and indigenous victims of the conflict of El Porvenir and Matarraton Village in Puerto Gaitan) – ASOCAMEI.

In the late 1980s, the inhabitants of these communities were threatened by armed groups and forced to leave their lands. Their land was then illegally sold and taken by armed groups. Luz Marina advocates for the right of the displaced *campesinos* to regain their land in compliance with the Constitutional Court’s decision SU-426 that orders the national land agency in Colombia to allocate the land to the “historical inhabitant.”

Luz Marina Arteaga is the spokesperson for the land restitution process in “Matarraton” and “El Porvenir”. Due to her work she has been the target of threats by armed groups who want to keep their land for themselves. On 16 April 2019, she received a call from the alleged commander of the paramilitary group "Los Rastrojos". Luz Marina told Amnesty International the message was the following: “You have to leave the village or else we kill you (...) we know all your routes to the village.” Neighbours told the defender that on 2 October, two unknown men monitored her house and days later, 3 unknown men asked in the village for her whereabouts.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish.

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 9 December 2019

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Luz Marina Arteaga (She, her, her)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: n/a