

URGENT ACTION

WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

Gloria Amparo Suárez and Yolanda Becerra, from the women's human rights organization OFP, have been threatened with violence against their children in Barrancabermeja, Northern Colombia.

On 11 February a man came to the office of the Popular Women's Organization (*Organización Femenina Popular*, OFP) asking for information about the validation programme of the high school diploma (*bachillerato*) for adults. After being attended by **Gloria Amparo Suárez**, the legal representative of OFP, he asked her "Why do you not dedicate yourself to this instead of fucking around at the national level and creating commotion" (*Por qué no se dedican a esto en vez de estar jodiendo a nivel nacional y estar formando alborotos?*)

He asked Gloria Amparo Suárez if she knew where her children were. Then he showed her his mobile and said "we do" (*nosotros sí*) and showed her pictures of her sons. He also showed her a picture of **Yolanda Becerra**, the director of OFP. The picture showed her getting out of a car, which she has received as part of the government protection programme. He said "Tell Becerra that [...] we know all of her movements so, as you already know, stop this shit and be quiet because we do not want to have to fuck with you" (*dígale a Becerra [...] que sabemos todos sus movimientos así que ya saben paren esa mierda y calladitas que no las queremos joder*)

Gloria Amparo Suárez and Yolanda Becerra have been lobbying and participating in local and national processes demanding victims' right to truth, justice and reparation. They have been repeatedly threatened by paramilitaries.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Gloria Amparo Suárez and her children, Yolanda Becerra and other members of OFP in the light of threats against them, and calling on the authorities to protect them, in line with their wishes;
- Urging the Colombian authorities to order full and impartial investigations into the threats; to publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding the Colombian authorities to fulfil their obligations regarding the protection of human rights defenders as specified in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, to which Colombia is a state party.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 MARCH 2013 TO:

President

Señor Juan Manuel Santos
 Presidente de la República
 Palacio de Nariño
 Carrera 8 No.7-26, Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 596 0631 (keep trying)

Salutation: Dear President Santos/

Estimado Sr. Presidente Santos

Attorney General

Eduardo Montealegre
 Fiscalía General de la Nación
 Diagonal 22B No. 52-01 (Ciudad Salitre)
 Bloque C Piso 4
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax +57 1 570 2000 ext 2020 or 2023

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/

Estimado Sr. Fiscal General

And copies to:

Organización Femenina Popular
 Cra 36E No 53 – 37
 Barrancabermeja, Santander,
 Colombia

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The OFP was founded in 1972 and has been working to promote women's human rights in the Magdalena Medio region, including Barrancabermeja, Santander Department. Since 2000 the OFP has also been working in the cities of Bogotá and Neiva. Members of the OFP have been victims of several threats and attacks. Of the almost 140 attacks against members of the OFP most remain in impunity because of the authorities' failure to investigate these incidents as part of a systematic pattern of attack against the organization.

Many women human rights defenders, including community and social leaders, continue to be threatened and killed because of their work in favour of women's human rights and against violence. They are not only targeted in retaliation for their work as human rights defenders or as community and social leaders, but also in an effort to silence them when they expose abuses. Over the last few years, women human rights defenders and community leaders working with forcibly displaced communities and those campaigning for the restitution of stolen lands have also been the target of threats and killings, mainly by paramilitaries. Some of these women were also victims of sexual violence.

In the course of Colombia's long running armed conflict, human rights defenders and trade unionists have been particularly vulnerable to threats and killings. Most of these attacks are attributed to paramilitary groups. Guerrilla groups have also targeted human rights defenders, trade unionists and other social activists deemed to be a threat to their interests

Name: Gloria Amparo Suárez (female) and her sons (male), Yolanda Becerra (female)

Gender m/f: both

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