

URGENT ACTION

DEATH THREAT TO HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Ten Bogotá-based Colombian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 18 individuals, including human rights defenders, have received a death threat by email from the paramilitary Black Eagles Capital Bloc (Águilas Negras Bloque Capital D.C.). Their safety is believed to be under threat.

On 19 June, 10 Bogotá-based Colombian NGOs and eighteen individuals, including human rights defenders, several of them belonging to women's NGOs, received a death threat by email from the Black Eagles Capital Bloc. The email read: "Death penalty to the guerrilla bitches of the FARC that are opposing the policies of our government" (*Sentencia a la pena de muerte a las perras guerrilleras de las farc [sic] las cuales se oponen al las políticas de nuestro gobierno*), and bears the Black Eagle Capital Bloc logo. It went on to say that they had 20 days to leave the city no matter how protected they were. Some of the members of the NGOs mentioned in the threat are receiving protection measures ordered by the Inter American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States.

Among those threatened are Casa de la Mujer, Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres, Sisma Women's Corporation (Corporación Sisma Mujer), Afro Women's Association for Peace (Asociación Afro Mujeres por la Paz, AFROMUPAZ), and NGOs working with forcibly displaced women or women otherwise affected by the armed conflict. Amongst those named in the death threat are **Claudia Mejía**, Director of Sisma Women's Cooperation, **Luz Marina Becerra**, Director of the National Association of Displaced Afro-Colombians (Asociación Nacional de AfroColombianos Desplazados, AFRODES) and **Pilar Rueda** the Human Rights Ombudsman's delegate for children, young people and women.

This threat from the Black Eagles comes only weeks after a threat from the paramilitary Rastrojos Urban Commands (*Rastrojos Comandos Urbanos*) on 2 June, which mentioned several of the same NGOs and individuals.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Express concern for the security situation of those threatened, calling on the authorities to ensure protection measures deemed appropriate by those under threat and which take into account specific needs of women;
- Urge the authorities to fully and impartially investigate the threats against them and prosecute those responsible;
- Urge them to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links with the security forces, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other bodies.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 AUGUST 2011 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

**Salutation: Dear President Santos/
Excmo. Sr. Presidente Santos**

Minister of Interior and Justice

Señor Germán Vargas Lleras
Ministerio Del Interior y De Justicia
Carrera 9a. No. 14-10, Bogotá,
Colombia

Fax: +57 1 599 8961

**Salutation: Dear Minister Vargas/
Estimado Sr. Ministro Vargas**

Attorney General

Señora Viviane Morales
Fiscal General de la Nación
Diagonal 22B (Av. Luis Carlos
Galán No. 52-01) Bloque C
Piso 4, Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: +57 1 570 2091

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/
Estimada Sra. Fiscal Genera**

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 email threat of 19 June bears the Colombian flag, the flag of Santander Department and the logo of the Black Eagles. These symbols had been previously used in a threat on 13 August 2010 directed at women's organization and those campaigning for the restitution of stolen lands.

Over the last year there has been an increase in threats against and killings of leaders of displaced communities and of those seeking the return of stolen lands. On 7 June, Ana Fabricia Córdoba, an Afro descendant leader who campaigned on behalf of displaced communities in the Urabá region, was killed in Medellín, Antioquia Department. The killing took place only days before President Juan Manuel Santos signed the Victims and Land Restitution Law, by which the government claims it will return lands to millions of displaced people. There are concerns that such threats and killings could increase further as displaced communities and their leaders intensify efforts to reclaim their lands in light of the new law.

During Colombia's 45-year-old armed conflict, members of human rights organizations, trade unions and other social organizations have often been labelled as guerrilla collaborators or supporters by the security forces and paramilitaries. As a result they are often killed, threatened or subjected to enforced disappearance. Guerrilla groups have also threatened or killed human rights defenders they consider to be siding with the enemy.

Colombia's paramilitary groups were supposedly demobilized in a government-sponsored process that began in 2003. However, it is clear from the killings and the threats against human rights defenders in different parts of the country that they are still operating.

UA: 199/11 Index: AMR 23/022/2011 Issue Date: 24 June 2011

