

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST FAMILY AND DEFENDERS THREATENED

Human rights defenders Ingrid Vergara and Jeison Pava, as well as members of the Verbel family in northern Colombia, received death threats on 3 and 7 June. The two defenders have been accompanying the Verbel family in their fight for justice since the killing of Eder Verbel Rocha by paramilitaries in March 2011.

On 7 June, **Adolfo Verbel Rocha**, a peasant farmer in San Onofre, Sucre Department, received a threatening text message stating the intention to put an end to the Verbel family. The threat explicitly mentioned Adolfo Verbel and his brother **Orlando Verbel**, who is a survivor and witness to the killing of their brother Eder Verbel by paramilitaries on 23 March 2011. It stated that they were monitoring their movements and had police working with them. The text message also mentioned the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, **MOVICE**), which has been supporting the family. On 2 June, three men came to the Verbel family's farm and told a young man that he had four hours to leave.

On 3 June, **Ingrid Vergara**, a member of the Sucre branch of MOVICE, and **Jeison Pava**, a lawyer from the Permanent Human Rights Committee (Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, CPDH), which is part of MOVICE, received an email containing a death threat. It read: "Ingrid Vergara and Jeison Pava [...] the bodyguards will not be enough for the rain of bullets that will fall on you and your family" (*Ingrid Vergara y Jeison [sic] Pava [sic] [...] los escoltas no les alcanzaran [sic] para la lluvia de balas que les va a caer a ustedes y a sus familias*). The email was also sent to CPDH's general email address and MOVICE staff in Bogotá. Some of the staff in the Bogotá office are in charge of the security and protection of MOVICE members throughout the country.

On 30 May, two men were sentenced to 19 years in prison for the killing of Eder Verbel Rocha. They had been found guilty of the killing by the Second Tribunal of the Sincelejo Circuit in Sucre Department in early April. Jeison Pava is the Verbel family's lawyer and Ingrid Vergara has also supported the family in their fight for justice.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of Adolfo Verbel, Orlando Verbel, Ingrid Vergara, Jeison Pava, their families and other members of MOVICE, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Urging them to order full and impartial investigations into the threats, to publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging the government to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links with the security forces, in line with repeated UN recommendations;
- Reminding them to fulfill their obligations regarding the protection of human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 JULY 2014 TO:

President

Presidente 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**

Director of the Protection Unit

Sr. Andres Villamizar
 Director de la Unidad Nacional de
 Protección del Ministerio del Interior
 Carrera 58 No. 10-51
 Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: +57 1 261 6287 (keep trying)
**Salutation: Estimado Sr. Villamizar/
 Dear Mr. Villamizar**

And copies to:

NGO

Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de
 Crímenes de Estado
 Calle 45A No 20-21
 Bogotá, Colombia

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

MOVICE is a broad coalition of civil society organizations campaigning for truth, justice and reparation for the victims of Colombia's long-running internal armed conflict. Its members have documented and exposed many cases of killings and enforced disappearance carried out by the security forces and paramilitary groups in Sucre Department.

The members of the MOVICE Sucre branch have also been campaigning for land restitution and have been targeted for this work. On 23 March 2011, MOVICE member Eder Verbel Rocha was killed by paramilitaries. Another MOVICE member, Rogelio Martinez, who had been campaigning on the restitution of the La Alemania farm, was killed on 18 May 2010. Other members of MOVICE have received death threats and been attacked.

The Verbel Rocha family has been campaigning against impunity and for the rights of victims of impunity as part of the Sucre branch of MOVICE since 2006. Guillermo Verbel Rocha, Eder Verbel Rocha's brother, was killed on 4 January 2005 by paramilitaries after denouncing links between paramilitaries and local politicians. Since then, members of the Verbel Rocha family have been killed, forcibly displaced and threatened by paramilitaries.

Despite government claims that all paramilitaries demobilized in a government-sponsored programme that began in 2005, such groups continue to operate and commit serious human rights violations against human rights defenders and other civilians. This is sometimes carried out in collusion with the security forces, or with their consent.

Name: Adolfo Verbel Rocha (m), Orlando Verbel (m), Ingrid Vergara (f), Jeison Pava (m), their families and other members of MOVICE
Gender m/f: both

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