

# URGENT ACTION

## PEASANT FARMER COMMUNITY AT RISK

**Miguel Briceño, leader of the peasant farmer community of El Porvenir in central Colombia, has received repeated threatening telephone calls. Those occupying the community's land are fencing it off, contrary to a judicial order.**

On 6 April **Miguel Briceño**, leader of the **peasant farmer community of El Porvenir** in Puerto Gaitán Municipality, Meta Department, received repeated threatening telephone calls from a man who identified himself as being in charge in the area. The man also threatened Miguel Briceño's family. Miguel Briceño has previously received threatening telephone calls.

The peasant farmers of El Porvenir have been grazing their cattle on this land for about half a century, but in spite of their efforts they still do not have a land title. Over the years the community members have faced repeated grave human rights violations, in particular by paramilitaries who had a strong presence in the area. Their land had been adjudicated to people linked to the now deceased Víctor Carranza, one of the country's most powerful emerald entrepreneurs who was long suspected of having strong links to paramilitary groups. In July 2014, two years after a request was filed, the Colombian Institute of Rural Development (Instituto Colombiano de la Reforma Agraria, INCODER) issued a resolution revoking the illegal land titles that had been adjudicated to these people. More than eight months later those with the illegal land titles still remain on the land. The latest threatening calls come at a time when those illegally occupying the land are fencing off the community's land. The peasant farmers are fearful for their safety, as their leader continues to be threatened and they face new constraints on their livelihoods as their cattle is being stolen.

### Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Miguel Briceño and other members of the peasant farmer community of El Porvenir, and urging the authorities to provide effective protection for them in accordance with their wishes;
- Calling on them to order a full and impartial investigation into threats against Miguel Briceño, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links between them and the security forces.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 MAY 2015 TO:

#### President

Juan Manuel Santos  
 Presidente de la República  
 Casa de Nariño  
 Calle 7. No 6-54.  
 Bogotá, Colombia  
 Fax: +57 1 596 0631

**Salutation: Dear President Santos/**

**Excmo. Sr. Presidente Santos**

#### Minister of Agriculture and Rural

Development  
 Aurelio Iragorri Valencia  
 Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo  
 Rural  
 Avenida Jiménez No 7-1765, Piso 3  
 Bogotá, Colombia

Email:

despachoministro@minagricultura.gov.co

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

#### **And copies to:**

#### NGO

Corporación Claretiana Norman Pérez  
 Bello  
 Carrera 15 No 14-41  
 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

During the long-running armed conflict in Colombia, human rights defenders, as well as Indigenous, Afro-descendant and peasant farmer communities, have endured the brunt of the conflict. All the warring parties – the security forces, either alone or in collusion with paramilitary groups, and guerrilla forces – are responsible for violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, including killings, enforced disappearances or abductions, torture, crimes of sexual violence and forced displacement. Over the course of the conflict about eight million hectares of land have been abandoned or illegally acquired.

Leaders of displaced communities and those seeking the return of stolen lands have been killed or threatened, especially since the Victims and Land Restitution Law (Law 1448) was approved in June 2011 and came into force at the beginning of 2012. This law acknowledges the existence of an armed conflict in the country, and the rights of its victims. It provides for reparations, including land restitution, for many survivors of human rights abuses, including those perpetrated by state agents. However, many other victims of the conflict will be excluded from making claims for reparation, while significant areas of stolen land might still not be returned to their rightful owners.

The peasant farmers of El Porvenir are trying to get their land back through a different legal mechanism, Law 160 of 1994. INCODER adjudicates state-owned land, both under Law 1448 and Law 160. Action from INCODER is necessary so that the people from El Porvenir, and in many other cases related to state-owned lands, can obtain a land title. For more information about the El Porvenir case and the land restitution process and its obstacles, see the report: *A land title is not enough: Ensuring sustainable land restitution in Colombia*, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR23/031/2014/en/>.

Name: Miguel Briceño (m), members of the peasant farmer community of El Porvenir  
Gender m/f: both

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