

# URGENT ACTION

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER'S LIFE THREATENED

**Human rights defender Martha Elena Díaz Ospina has found a death threat, accusing her of being a guerrilla, on the doorstep of her house in Barranquilla, northern Colombia.**

**Martha Elena Díaz Ospina** came home on 24 January to find a death threat on her doorstep in Barranquilla, Atlántico department. Inside a funeral invitation was a death threat made up of letters cut from a newspaper: "You are dead, you are a collaborator of the guerrillas. Guerrilla we are no longer playing, some of you will fall" (*Estas muerta eres colaboradora de la guerrilla. Guerrillera Ila [sic] no extamos [sic] jugando alguno [sic] de ustedes va a caer*). Martha Elena Díaz Ospina is the founder and president of the Association of Families United by a Single Sorrow (*Asociación de Familias por un Solo Dolor*, AFUSODO) and a member of the Atlántico branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (*Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas e Crímenes de Estado*, MOVICE). AFUSODO supports relatives of those subjected to enforced disappearance, or extrajudicially executed, by the armed forces in Atlántico Department. As their spokesperson, Martha Elena Díaz Ospina has demanded that these people's bodies be returned to their families.

During the National Human Rights Conference of 11–13 December 2012, Martha Elena Díaz Ospina questioned the role of President Juan Manuel Santos, who was Defence Minister under President Uribe, in the extrajudicial executions of civilians presented as guerrillas killed in combat. She demanded to know why the generals responsible for these extrajudicial executions, known as "*falsos positivos*", were still free.

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

- Expressing concern for the safety of Martha Elena Díaz Ospina and urging the authorities to provide protection for her, in strict accordance with her wishes;
- Calling on them to order full and impartial investigations into the death threat against Martha Elena Díaz Ospina, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding them to fulfil their obligation to protect human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;
- Urging 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 intergovernmental organizations;
- Demanding a commitment to take decisive action to end extrajudicial executions, bring those responsible to justice and guarantee the protection of those campaigning for justice, in line with repeated UN recommendations.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 12 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

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

#### Minister of Interior

Señor Fernando Carrillo  
 Ministro del Interior  
 Carrera 8 No 7–83  
 Bogotá, Colombia  
 Fax: +57 1 283 9876 (keep trying)

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

#### And copies to:

MOVICE  
 Carrera 5 No. 16–14  
 Oficina 807,  
 Bogotá, 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

An email death threat against MOVICE Atlántico and several trade unions signed by the paramilitary group Los Rastrojos Comandos Urbanos had been received at the Trade Union Congress (*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores*, CUT) on 21 January. It read: "The Rastrojos Urban Commandos have declared the CUT a military target because of their terrorist actions carried out by guerrillas disguised as defenders of the workers...." (*Los Rastrojos Comandos Urbanos ha declarado objetivo militar a la CUT por sus acciones terroristas proferidas por guerrilleros disfrazados de defensores de trabajadores....*)

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 killings and enforced disappearances carried out by the security forces and paramilitary groups.

AFUSODO is an organization of family members of victims of extrajudicial executions. It supports the mothers of those subjected to enforced disappearance by the armed forces. During the long-running armed conflict in Colombia, extrajudicial executions have been carried out by the security forces in a widespread and systematic manner. They have been part of the terror tactics used by the security forces as part of their counter-insurgency strategy. The Attorney General's Office is investigating more than 2,000 extrajudicial executions committed by the security forces. Those campaigning for justice in cases of extrajudicial execution have been repeatedly subjected to death threats, or have been killed by members of the security forces or paramilitaries working with them.

The security forces and paramilitary groups have frequently labelled human rights organizations and trade unions as guerrilla collaborators or supporters, and have gone on to threaten, abduct or kill them. Guerrillas have also threatened and killed human rights defenders.

Name: Martha Elena Díaz Ospina

Gender m/f: f

UA: 22/13 Index: AMR 23/004/2013 Issue Date: 29 January 2013