

URGENT ACTION

MORE LAND RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

On 11 October, the National Coordination of Displaced People – a group that works with people displaced by armed conflict – received a death threat from the paramilitary group Anti Land Restitution Army, mentioning several human right defenders and organizations. A similar death threat was sent on 2 October.

On 11 October, a death threat was emailed to the National Coordination of Displaced People (*Coordinación Nacional de Desplazados, CND*), which was also intended for **Alfonso Castillo** of the National Association of Solidarity Help (*Asociación Nacional de Ayuda Solidaria, ANDAS*). Both organizations are members of MOVICE. The email was sent by the Anti Land Restitution Army and named several individuals and organizations, some of whom had been mentioned in an earlier death threat sent on 2 October. Many of the organizations named are members of MOVICE.

Less than 10 days after the last email with death threats, a new email from the Anti Land Restitution Army paramilitary group containing death threats was received. It accused numerous NGOs and individuals of being collaborators of the guerrilla, saying they were “advising victims and displaced people to sue the Colombian state for recovery of lands from which they were displaced” (“*orientando a las víctimas y a personas desplazada [sic] para demandar al estado colombiano por las tierras desplazadas*”). The email continued, saying “we have received all the addresses of the offices, of your homes and the places you frequent daily, because we are going after the following organizations and people” (“*ya nos dieron todas las direcciones de las oficinas, de sus residencias y los sitios que frecuentan a diario ya nos vamos por las siguientes organizaciones y personas*”). The email also stated that there were regions where they exercise control without specifying the regions.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Alfonso Castillo and the other individuals and NGOs named in the email (see overleaf) and urging the authorities to protect them, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Calling on the authorities to order full and impartial investigations into the death threats, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding the authorities to fulfil their obligation to protect human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;
- Urging the authorities 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.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 NOVEMBER 2012 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/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. This is the first update of UA 299/12. Further information:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/039/2012/en>.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

MORE LAND RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Over the course of Colombia's long-running armed conflict, millions of hectares of land have been misappropriated, often through violence, from the rightful owners – especially Indigenous People and Afro-descendants and peasant farmer communities. The various parties to the conflict – paramilitaries and the security forces, frequently acting in close collusion with each other, and guerrilla groups – have driven over five million people from their homes.

Leaders of displaced communities and those seeking the return of stolen lands have been killed or threatened, especially since the Land and Victims Restitution Law 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 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. Similarly human rights defenders campaigning for justice in cases of human rights violations, including members of MOVICE, have faced repeated death threats often from paramilitaries operating in different parts of the country.

Since February 2012 paramilitary forces who call themselves “anti restitution armies” have been reported in several parts of Colombia. Colombia's paramilitary groups supposedly demobilized in a government-sponsored process that began in 2003, but it is clear from the continuing threats against human rights defenders and other vulnerable groups in different parts of the country that they are still operating.

Name: Members of AFUSODO, MOVICE, CND, ANDAS, Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, Fundación para el Desarrollo y la Paz (FUNDEPAZ), Marcha Patriótica, Colectivo Mujeres al Derecho, Fundación Infancia Feliz (FIF), Fundación Comité Presos Políticos (FCSP), Corporación Jurídica Yira Castro, Corporación Jurídica Humanidad Vigente, Polo Democrático, (both)

Misael Delgado Rada (m) and members of his family (both),

Rosario Montoya Hoyos, Sandra Manjares, Piedad Córdoba, Ruby Castaño, Rosario Aguilar, Miryam Clemencia Ruiz Molina, Sister Alba Estela (f)

Alfonso Castillo, Iván Cepeda, Rigoberto Jiménez, Alfonso Caicedo, Hipólito Rennteria, Fredy Guerrero, Felipe Flor (m)

Gender: both

Further information on UA: 299/12 Index: 23/041/2012 Issue Date: 19 October 2012