

URGENT ACTION

DEATH THREATS MADE TO HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS Human rights defenders in the city of Barrancabermeja, in the Magdalena Medio region in north-eastern Colombia, have received death threats.

On 23 January **Iván Madero Vergel**, the president of the Regional Human Rights Corporation (Corporación Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, **CREDHOS**), met with other members of CREDHOS and Peace Brigades International (PBI) in Barrancabermeja, Santander Department. While in the meeting, one of those present received a phone call and was told: "Tell the son of a bitch Iván Madero that because he has not respected the 48 hours that were given to him to leave Barranca we are going to kill his wife and the children... and the guerrilla fighter sister he has" (*Digale al hijo de puta de Iván Madero que como no acato las 48 horas que le dieron para irse de Barranca, le vamos a matar a la esposa y los hijos...y a la malparida hermana que tiene*).

Previously, on 9 January, another threatening phone call was made to CREDHOS' office in which Iván Madero Vergel was warned that he had 48 hours to leave Barrancabermeja. His family was also threatened. These threats follow the theft of information from CREDHOS on 22 November 2013 and the surveillance of their office by unidentified individuals on 27 November 2013.

Also on 9 January, **Lila Peña**, the president of the Regional Association of Victims of State Crimes of Magdalena Medio (Asociación Regional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado del Magdalena Medio, **ASORVIMM**), which is also based in Barrancabermeja, found a bullet and a threatening note at their office. The death threat named ASORVIMM, Lila Peña and **Melkin Castrillón Peña**, accusing them of being guerrilla fighters disguised as victims. Melkin Castrillón Peña is a member of the Peasant Farmer Association of the Cimitarra River Valley (Asociación Campesina del Valle del Río Cimitarra, **ACVC**).

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Iván Madero Vergel and his family, as well as Lila Peña, Melkin Castrillón Peña and other members of CREDHOS, ASORVIMM and ACVC, and calling on the authorities to take action to guarantee their safety, in line with their wishes;
- Urging the Colombian authorities to order full and impartial investigations into the death threats, to publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding the Colombian authorities to fulfil their obligations regarding the protections of human rights defenders as specified in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, to which Colombia is a state party.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 MARCH 2014 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**

Attorney General

Eduardo Montealegre
Fiscalía General de la Nación
Diagonal 22B No. 52-01 (Ciudad Salitre)
Bloque C Piso 4
Bogotá, Colombia
Fax +57 1 570 2000 (when recorded)

voice answers, dial ext 2023)
**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/
Estimado Sr. Fiscal General**

And copies to:

NGO
CREDHOS
Av. 52 No. 25-49
Barrancabermeja, Santander
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

CREDHOS is a regional human rights organization campaigning for justice for human rights violations around Barrancabermeja and the Magdalena Medio area. Over the years, members of CREDHOS have repeatedly faced death threats. David Ravelo Crespo, a member of CREDHOS, has been detained by the authorities, accused of links with guerrilla groups, since September 2010. Human rights organizations have expressed concerns that the case against David Ravelo is part of an effort to discredit and silence CREDHOS.

The security forces and paramilitary groups have frequently labelled human rights organizations including members of CREDHOS as guerrilla collaborators or supporters. In this context, CREDHOS members have been repeatedly threatened by paramilitaries. Numerous human rights defenders have been killed after being labelled guerrilla sympathizers.

Guerrilla groups have also threatened or killed human rights defenders and trade unionists who they consider to be siding with their enemies.

Over the last year there have been repeated death threats against human rights organizations in Barrancabermeja, including human rights NGOs, trade unions and the LGBTI movement.

Name: Iván Madero Vergel (m) and his family, Lila Peña (f), Melkin Castrillón Peña (m) members of ASORVIMM, ACVC and CREDHOS
Gender m/f: both

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