

URGENT ACTION

PARAMILITARY DEATH THREATS MUST BE STOPPED

Paramilitaries calling themselves the "Black Eagles" have left a printed death threat at the home of a human rights defender in northern Colombia.

On 12 February the daughter of a member of the Sucre branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (*Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado*, MOVICE) in Sincelejo, found a threat to kill several members of MOVICE on a piece of paper that had been slipped under the door of her home. It was the printout of an email sent to several members of MOVICE Sucre on 9 December 2011, signed by the "Black Eagles" (*Aguilas Negras*) paramilitary group, and read: "you members of MOVICE are rats which have to be exterminated ...[you] who take the land away from the good people to give it to guerrillas who pretend to be peasant farmers we are going to kill your ringleaders in Sucre ... **Ingrid Vergara and Juan David Diaz**, ... followed by **Adolfo Verbel, Verónica Montaña, Adil Melendres, Jorge Velásquez, Malena Martínez, Candelaria Barrios and Adriana Porras**" (*Ustedes los miembros del movice son unas ratas a las que hay que exterminar ... que le quita la tierra a la gente de bien para entregarselas (sic) a guerrilleros que se hacen pasar por campesinos, de manera que daremos de baja a sus cabecillas en Sucre ... Ingrid Vergara Y a Juan David Diaz ... En la lista siguen Adolfo Verbel, Verónica Montaña, Adil Melendres, Jorge Velasquez, Malena Martinez, Candelaria Barrios Y Adriana Porras*). It said that because the previous warning had been ignored, the Black Eagles would "go ahead with the respective families and see if it hurts" (*Procederemos con sus respectivas familias, a ver si les duele*). It also named MOVICE leader **Iván Cepeda**, who is now a member of the Colombian Congress. On 6 February Iván Cepeda's office announced that he had received an anonymous phone call warning him that an attempt to kill him was planned in Tolima department.

The death threat came days after MOVICE Sucre organized a meeting for peasant farmers in the Montes de María area to discuss the difficult human rights situation and the problems related to land. Members of MOVICE Sucre have been campaigning for the restitution of misappropriated lands.

Please write immediately in Spanish, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of Ingrid Vergara, Juan David Díaz, Adolfo Verbel, Veronica Montaña, Adil Melendres, Jorge Velásquez, Malena Martínez, Candelaria Barrios, Adriana Porras and Iván Cepeda, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Urging them to order full and impartial investigations into the death threats received by members of MOVICE, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- 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 1 APRIL 2013 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**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural

Development
Juan Camilo Restrepo
Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo
Rural, Avenida Jiménez No 7-65, Piso 3
Bogotá, Colombia
Fax: +57 1 286 2649

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

And copies to:

NGO

Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de
Crímenes de Estado
Calle 38 No 28 A 30
Barrio Bogotá, Sincelejo
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

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 been campaigning for land restitution. 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 La Alemania farm, had been killed on 18 May 2010. Other members of MOVICE have been threatened with death and attacked.

Ingrid Vergara, Juan David Diaz, Adolfo Verbel, Verónica Montaña, Adil Melendres, Jorge Velásquez, Malena Martínez and Candelaria Barrios are all members of the MOVICE Sucre branch. Adriana Porras is a member of a different human rights organization that works closely with MOVICE Sucre, the Network of Leaders of Montes de Maria (*Red de Lideres y Lideresas de Montes de María*).

Names: Ingrid Vergara, Juan David Díaz, Adolfo Verbel, Verónica Montaña, Adil Melendres, Jorge Velásquez, Malena Martínez, Candelaria Barrios, Adriana Porras, Iván Cepeda

Gender m/f: Ingrid Vergara (f), Juan David Díaz (m), Adolfo Verbel (m), Verónica Montaña (f), Adil Melendres (m), Jorge Velásquez (m), Malena Martínez (f), Candelaria Barrios (f), Adriana Porras (f), Iván Cepeda (m)

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