

URGENT ACTION

NEW DEATH THREATS IN COLOMBIA

On 1 June, a death threat by a paramilitary group was left at the home of Juan David Díaz Chamorro, a member of MOVICE in Sincelejo, Northern Colombia. The death threat also referred to other human rights defenders campaigning for land restitution.

On 1 June, a police officer in charge of protecting the home of human rights defender **Juan David Díaz Chamorro** in Sincelejo, Sucre Department, found a parcel on the terrace of the house. It contained 10 white candles wrapped in paper. On the paper it read: "Juan Díaz [sic] you are warned and informed we have fully identified and located you. We know you are one of the sons-of-bitches who with the excuse of being a human rights defender want to dispossess from their land the real owners so that it ends up in the hands of a handful of guerrillas" [...] and now pretending to be victims you want to appropriate La Europa and La Alemania [...] We will do away with you all". Juan David Díaz Chamorro is a member of the Sucre branch of the non-governmental human rights organization National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (*Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado*, MOVICE). They have been campaigning for land restitution in Sucre Department, including the farms La Europa and La Alemania.

"Bodyguards or government are of no use. There is a bullet for each of you", the note signed "Anti Restitution Army" (*ejercito [sic] antirestitucion [sic]*) continued. Several members of MOVICE Sucre have repeatedly received death threats. At the beginning of this year, a Victims and Land Restitution Law came into force. Since February 2012 paramilitary forces referring to themselves as "anti restitution armies" have been reported in several parts of Colombia.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urge the authorities to guarantee the safety of Juan David Díaz Chamorro and other members of MOVICE Sucre, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Urge the Colombian authorities to order full and impartial investigations into the death threats against Juan David Díaz Chamorro; to publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Remind the Colombian authorities to fulfill their obligations regarding the protections of human rights defenders as specified in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;
- Urge 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 bodies.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JULY 2012 TO:

President

Señor Juan Manuel Santos
 Presidente de la República de Colombia
 Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26,
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 566 2071

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

Minister of Foreign Affairs

María Angela Holguín
 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
 Palacio San Carlos
 Calle 10 No. 5-51
 Bogotá
 Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 381 4742 (wait for tone after
 voice recording)

**Salutation: Estimada Señora Ministra/
 Dear Minister**

And copies to:

NGO

Movice
 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 insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 141/12. Further information:
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/021/2012/en

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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. The members of MOVICE have documented and exposed many cases of killings and enforced disappearance carried out by the security forces and paramilitary groups in Sucre Department. On 6 March, MOVICE organized protest marches with a special appeal for the implementation of an effective and comprehensive process for the restitution of lands violently seized by all parties to the conflict – the paramilitaries, the security forces and guerrilla groups.

The members of the MOVICE Sucre branch have been campaigning for land restitution, including the cases of La Alemania and La Europa farms. On 23 March 2011, Eder Verbel Roacha, a member of MOVICE, was killed by paramilitaries. On 18 May 2010, Rogelio Martinez, also a member of MOVICE who had been campaigning on the restitution of La Alemania farm, was killed. Other members of MOVICE have faced death threats and attacks.

Juan David Díaz Chamorro is the son of the former mayor of Roble, Eudaldo Díaz. Eudaldo Díaz was killed on 10 April 2003 after he had participated at a meeting on 1 February 2003 presided by then President Álvaro Uribe and in which regional political leaders participated. Eudaldo Díaz had denounced links between paramilitaries and local politicians. He reportedly stated that the then head of the Civil Intelligence Service (DAS) in Sucre had written an intelligence report in which he was labelled a guerrilla. Juan David Díaz Chamorro was threatened by paramilitaries on the same day that his father was killed. He survived several further apparent attempts on his life.

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.

Name: Juan David Díaz Chamorro and other members of MOVICE Sucre

Gender m/f: male and female

Further information on UA: 141/12 Index: AMR 23/022/2012 Issue Date: 7 June 2012

