

URGENT ACTION

STOP PARAMILITARY DEATH THREATS

A paramilitary group has threatened to kill six individuals and members of five organizations in western Colombia. All are in grave danger.

The threat came on 22 October in a fax signed by the paramilitary group Black Eagles New Generation (*Aguilas Negras Nueva Generación*) sent to the Valle del Cauca office of the Trade Union Congress (*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores*, CUT). The fax said that the people and organizations it named were now military targets.

The fax accused those named of supporting the guerrillas: "You are the defenders of the guerrillas ... we have determined that it is necessary to expand the fight against those who hide in social organisations such as CUT Valle, NOMADESC, human rights defenders, NGOs." (*Ustedes son defensores de la guerrilla ... Hemos definido que se hace necesario de nuevo emprender la lucha contra aquellos que se camuflan en las organizaciones sociales como CUT, Valle, NOMADESC, Defensores DDHH, ONG.*) In the past, human rights, social, trade union and Indigenous activists and leaders who have been labelled subversives by the security forces or paramilitary groups have often been the target of subsequent serious human rights violations, including killings.

The fax also accused them of stopping the economic development of the Cauca region: "These bureaucrats don't let CAUCA progress, as they don't allow entry for the multinationals which do bring benefits to the communities." (*Esos burocratas no dejan progresar el CAUCA, donde no permiten el ingreso de las multinacionales que si traen beneficio a las comunidades.*)

Some of the organizations and individuals have been harassed since shortly before the fax was sent. One of them, José Goyes, received a telephone death threat the same day. In recent years José Goyes has been subject to death threats and has survived an attempt on his life. Men were seen keeping watch on the Social Research and Action Association (*Asociación de Investigación y la Acción Social*, NOMADESC) office in Cali from 20 to 23 October, and again on 28 October.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the death threat sent to CUT Valle del Cauca on 22 October, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Demanding that they provide protection for those threatened, as agreed with those in danger;
- Urging them to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 DECEMBER 2009 TO:

President

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez
Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26, Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: +57 1 337 5890

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

Vice-president

Dr. Francisco Santos Calderón
Vicepresidencia
Carrera 8A No 7-27
Bogotá, Colombia

Fax: +57 1 444 2158

**say "Me da tono por favor"
Salutation: Dear Vice-president/
Sr. Vicepresidente**

And copies to:

NOMADESC
Carrera 4 No. 4-43 ofi. 201
Cali, Colombia

CUT Valle

Carrera 11 B No.22-36
Barrio Obrero
Cali, 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

The fax received on 22 October named five men: José Goyes, member of the Indigenous rights organization, the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (*Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca*, CRIC); Licifredy Arara, member of the Community Council of La Toma, Suárez municipality; Meraldiño Cabiche, member of the Town Council of Suárez municipality; Plutarco Mina, a member of the Black Communities Process (*Proceso de Comunidades Negras*, PCN); and Eduar Villegas and Diego Escobar, both members of Valle del Cauca office of the Trade Union Congress (*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores*, CUT).

It also named the human rights organisation NOMADESC; the Valle del Cauca office of the CUT; PCN; the Community Council of La Toma (*Consejo Comunitario de la Toma*); and the Indigenous Community of Cerro Tijeras (*Cabildo Indígena Cerro Tijeras*).

During Colombia's 40-year internal armed conflict, 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. Guerrilla groups have also threatened or killed human rights defenders and trade unionists they consider to be siding with their enemies.

Colombia's paramilitary groups supposedly demobilized in a government-sponsored process that began in 2003, but it is clear from the threats against human rights organizations and trade unions, in Valle de Cauca and elsewhere, that they are still operating.

This threat comes at a time when threats have intensified against those social and human rights organizations and individuals that have supported the recent social mobilization of Indigenous People in the region.

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