

URGENT ACTION

DEFENDER AT RISK IN COVID-19 QUARANTINE

On 17 April, at around 2:30pm, Jani Silva heard 6 gunshots at less than 30 metres from her residence in Puerto Asís in Putumayo (South West), Colombia. On 22 April, she heard again three-gun shots at less than 50 meters from her residence and noise from the movement of people and a motorcycle around her house. These two incidents occurred after a confidential source provided information to the Inter-Church Commission for Truth and Peace (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz) in late March about an ongoing plan to kill Jani Silva. We are urging the Ministry of Interior to provide appropriate protection to her.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Mrs. Alicia Arango Olmos
Minister of Interior

Carrera 8 No. 7 – 83

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

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Minister Arango,

I am writing to express concern for the safety Jani Silva, a human rights defender from the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazon Pearl (ADISPA), advocating for peace and the environment in Putumayo.

Jani has denounced different security incidents since the COVID-19 quarantine started. On 17 and 22 April when she heard gun shots near her home, and an irregular movement of people and a motorcycle. On March 26th, Inter-Church Commission for Truth and Peace (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz) received information of an ongoing plan to kill her.

We urge you to grant Jani Silva an armoured vehicle for her transportation; give her access to a protected boat to ensure her transportation back and forth from the Peasant Reservation Area of the Amazon Pearl; and ensure there is police protection while she is at her home.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Jani Silva is an environmental, human rights and peace defender who has promoted the implementation of the Peace Agreement in the territory and has promoted reforestation initiatives, denouncing the socio-environmental effects of oil operations, including those of Amerisur. Amerisur is a hydrocarbon exploitation company operating mainly in Putumayo basins. The company has the following partners in its operations: ONGC Videsh Ltd (India), Canacol Energy Ltd. (Canada), Pluspetrol (Netherlands), Pacific Exploration & Production (Frontera Energy, Canada), Vetra (Colombia) and Occidental Petroleum (USA).

Due to her role as a peace defender, armed groups have threatened to take her life in order to silence one of the strongest social causes' voices in Putumayo. Jani has also received threats for opposing an oil company in the area. She has been threatened with taking her life and the life of her family members if she continues to promote demonstrations for a healthy environment. The origin of the threats is unknown.

Jani Silva is the legal representative of the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazon Pearl (Asociación para el Desarrollo Integral y Sostenible de la Perla Amazónica, ADISPA), which is in a community organization aimed to protect the rights of the communities that live in the Peasant Reservation Area of the Amazon Pearl .

On March 26th, 2020, the Inter-Church Commission for Truth and Peace (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz) received information about a scheme to kill Jani Silva during any of her movements to the Peasant Reservation Area.

Since president Iván Duque declared a national quarantine on March 24, at least 14 people who defend human rights and social leaders have been killed, 3 of them while they complied with the quarantine in their homes. The incident taking place on 22 April occurred during the lockdown ordered by the Colombian government to avoid the spread of the COVID-19, which in Puerto Asís, starts on 6 p.m. and finishes on 5 a.m.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 10 June 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Jani Silva – She, her, hers

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: N/A