

URGENT ACTION

ATTEMPTED KIDNAP OF FEMALE DEFENDER

On 23 January 2012, an attempted kidnapping took place of Blanca Nubia Díaz in Bogotá, Colombia. She is seeking justice for the rape and killing of her daughter Irina del Carmen Villero Díaz by paramilitaries.

On 23 January, in plain daylight, a car followed **Blanca Nubia Díaz** in Bogotá. A woman got out of the car and told Blanca Nubia Díaz that "Doctor Irene has sent us to tell you to come with us". (*La Doctora Irene mandó a decir que vaya con nosotros*). When Blanca Nubia Díaz replied that she did not know this person, the woman insisted she get in the car, saying "Get in, how could you not know her, she is handling your case". (*Súbase, cómo no la va a conocer si ella lleva su caso*). Blanca Nubia Díaz was repeatedly ordered to get into the vehicle and the woman also tried to force her inside. When Blanca Nubia Díaz started to call for help she left.

Blanca Nubia Díaz is a member of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (*Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas e Crimenes de Estado*, MOVICE). She has been seeking justice after paramilitaries operating with the security forces tortured, raped and killed her daughter Irina del Carmen Villero Díaz in May 2001, in Albania Municipality, La Guajira Department. After the killing she reported the crime to the local Office of the Attorney General in Maicao, La Guajira Department. However, no progress was made in the case until the Constitutional Court ordered the authorities, in 2008, to investigate over 180 conflict-related sexual crimes against women and girls, including that of Blanca Nubia Díaz's daughter. **Irene López Garzón** – who is Blanca Nubia Díaz's lawyer and is a director of the human rights NGO Corporación Jurídica Yira Castro, which is also part of MOVICE – denies having sent someone to pick her up. She has also received repeated death threats over the years because of her work campaigning against impunity.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Express concern for the safety of Blanca Nubia Díaz, her family, Irene López Garzón, and other members of MOVICE and urge the authorities to guarantee their safety in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Call on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the attempted kidnapping and threats against Blanca Nubia Díaz, her family and Irene López Garzón as well as the rape, torture and killing of Irina del Carmen Villero Díaz in 2001, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urge the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links with the security forces, in line with stated government commitments and UN recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.
- Urge the authorities to follow-up on the recommendations and conclusions of international and regional mechanisms for protection of women's rights and combating violence against women.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 MARCH 2012 TO:

President

Señor Juan Manuel Santos
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

Señora Viviane Morales
Fiscalía General de la Nación
Diagonal 22B No. 52-01
Bloque C Piso 4
Bogotá,
Colombia

Fax: +57 1 570 2000 ext 2023
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Estimada Sra. Fiscal General

And copies to:
MVICE
Carrera 5 No. 16-14
Oficina 807
Bogotá
COLOMBIA

Formatted: English (United Kingdom)

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**



URGENT ACTION

ATTEMPTED KIDNAP OF FEMALE DEFENDER

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Over the past 45 years, Colombia's internal armed conflict has pitted the security forces and paramilitaries against a range of guerrilla groups. All the warring parties continue to be responsible for widespread and serious crimes under international law and human rights violations, including systematic sexual violence against women and girls. Despite the fact that many of these violations amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity, the Colombian authorities have failed to take decisive actions to end conflict-related violence against women and to bring the perpetrators to justice. The lack of security dissuades most victims and relatives from reporting abuses. Witnesses, victims' families, prosecutors, lawyers and judges participating in human rights related investigations have also been killed, threatened and subjected to surveillance.

Despite government claims that all paramilitaries demobilized in a government-sponsored programme that began in 2003, such groups continue to operate and commit serious human rights violations against human rights defenders and other civilians. This is sometimes in collusion with the security forces, or with their consent.

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. Members of MOVICE in different branches across the country have repeatedly faced threats and intimidation.

On 26 March 2001 15-year-old Irina del Carmen Villero Díaz, a member of the Wayúu Indigenous community in La Guajira Department, was tortured, raped and killed by paramilitaries in the Cuestecitas area of Albania Municipality, La Guajira Department. When her mother Blanca Nubia Díaz tried to find her she was informed that several women had been killed at the same time. Blanca Nubia Díaz managed to establish the whereabouts of the body, but she was forcibly displaced from La Guajira Department due to threats from paramilitaries. The body was buried as an unidentified person and it was not until 2010 that she was finally able to reclaim the body. In August 2010 Irina del Carmen was buried under the rituals of the Wayúu Indigenous People. The investigations into the rape, torture and killing have not made any progress in over a decade.

Blanca Nubia Díaz and her family have been threatened repeatedly. On 28 July 2011, Blanca Nubia Díaz's grandson was told by two men in Bogotá "We know your mother, and we know about your granny Blanca Nubia, and what she does and who she is with..." (nosotros conocemos a su mama, y sabemos de su abuelita Blanca Nubia, que hace y con quienes anda).

Name: Blanca Nubia Díaz and Irene López Garzón

Gender m/f: Blanca Nubia Díaz (female) and Irene López Garzón (female)

UA: 26/12 Index: 23/004/2012 Issue Date: 26 January 2012