

URGENT ACTION

TRADE UNIONISTS' LIVES IN DANGER IN COLOMBIA

Trade unionists Oscar Arturo Orozco and Wilson Jaramillo's lives are in danger after shots were fired at the car they were travelling in on 4 August in Caldas Department, Colombia.

The president of the Caldas branch of the Trade Union Congress (Central Unitaria de Trabajadores, CUT), **Oscar Arturo Orozco** and the secretary general **Wilson Jaramillo** were travelling by car between Manizales and the municipality of Palestina in Caldas Department when shots were fired by two men on a motorbike and several others standing at the side of the road. Several shots hit the car, but neither man was injured. Both men are also members of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, MOVICE) and the Colombian Electricity Workers' Union (Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Electricidad de Colombia, SINTRAELECOL).

They were on their way to a meeting with fishermen of the Arauca River. The local fishermen have been complaining that the environmental impact of the Caldas Hydroelectric Power Plant (Central Hidroeléctrica de Caldas) has had a negative impact on their livelihoods.

Over recent years flyers containing death threats have been repeatedly left at the office of SINTRAELECOL, most recently in mid-July when the death threat contained a picture of bullet cartridges. According to the CUT, 12 trade unionists have been killed in Colombia in this year alone. This attack comes at a time when there had been an order to remove the protection Oscar Arturo Orozco was receiving and when parts of the budget of the Ministry of Interior Protection Programme have been reduced.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Oscar Arturo Orozco and Wilson Jaramillo and urge the authorities to take appropriate measures to protect them, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Calling on the Colombian authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the attack against Oscar Arturo Orozco and Wilson Jaramillo and other previous incidents against members of CUT Caldas;
- Calling on the Colombian authorities to publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Calling on them to dismantle any paramilitary groups that continue to operate in the area and break any continued links with the security forces in line with repeated United Nations human rights recommendations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 SEPTEMBER 2012 TO:

President

Señor 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/

Estimado Sr. Presidente Santos

Minister of Interior

Señor Federico Renjifo Vélez
 Ministerio Del Interior
 Carrera 8 No. 7-83, Bogotá, Colombia

Salutation: Dear Minister Renjifo /

Estimado Sr. Ministro Renjifo

Minister of Labour

Rafael Pardo Rueda
 Ministerio de Trabajo
 Carrera 14, No.99-33,
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 489 3900 ext 2320

Salutation: Dear Minister Pardo/

Estimado Sr. Ministro Pardo

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**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The mining, oil, gas and energy sectors are among Colombia's most lucrative industries. Oil and mining exports provide an important source of income to the economy. Colombia's vast wealth in water resources has also provided the country with significant hydroelectric energy capacity. Much of the electricity produced is exported to neighbouring countries providing Colombia with an important source of income. Colombia's wealth in water and mining, oil and gas, coupled with increased privatization of important parts of these industries, has attracted major transnational corporations to the country.

Trade unionists in these sectors have faced repeated human rights violations, in the context of labour disputes; in the context of campaigns against privatization or in the context of campaigns to support communities opposing the development of large-scale infrastructure projects which they consider will impact negatively on their livelihoods.

Since 1986, 2896 have been killed, the vast majority by paramilitaries operating with the support of the security forces and directly by the security forces. Guerrillas have also been responsible for killings of trade unionists. Over 90% of these killings remain in impunity.

Name: Oscar Arturo Orozco and Wilson Jaramillo

Gender m/f: both male

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