

URGENT ACTION

PEASANT FARMERS AT RISK FOLLOWING KILLINGS

Two peasant farmer leaders have been killed in the municipality of Tierralta, northern Colombia. There are fears for the safety of peasant farmers living in the area.

Emel Antonio Varela Tuberquia, president of the local Communal Action Council (*Junta de Acción Comunal*), of the hamlet of La Estrella, Tierralta Municipality, Córdoba Department was killed on 26 July by armed men at his home. On 22 July, armed men killed **Elmer Antonio Serna Usuaga**, who was the president of the local Communal Action Council of the hamlet of La Gloria in Tierralta Municipality. Both men were members of the Peasant Farmer Association for the Development of the Alto Sinú (*Asociación Campesina para el Desarrollo del Alto Sinú*, **ASODECAS**). Alto Sinú is an area in north-western Colombia covering the municipalities of Tierralta and Valencia in Córdoba Department. Reportedly, in 2013 five peasant farmer leaders have been killed in Alto Sinú.

ASODECAS was one of several organizations that held a public meeting in El Crucito, Tierralta Municipality on 26 and 27 April to raise awareness of the humanitarian and human rights crisis in the area. There were almost 900 participants from different parts of the country in attendance. Both men had participated in the event. ASODECAS has been convening meetings to discuss the peace process, which are planned to take place between 14 and 28 August in different localities in Córdoba department. After the recent killings ASODECAS fears for the leaders who would be taking part in those community gatherings.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the peasant farmers of Alto Sinú, including members of ASODECAS, and calling on the authorities to provide them with effective protection, in line with their wishes;
- Demanding that the authorities order full and impartial investigations into the killings of Emel Antonio Varela Tuberquia and Elmer Antonio Serna Usuaga, and publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to comply fully with UN recommendations on effectively protecting communities at risk.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 SEPTEMBER 2013 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 (keep trying)

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

Defence Minister

Señor Juan Carlos Pinzón
 Ministerio de Defensa
 Carrera 54, no.26-29
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 266 1003

**Salutation: Dear Minister Pinzón/
 Sr. Ministro Pinzón**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

Francisco Estupiñán Heredia
 Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo
 Rural, Avenida Jiménez No 7-65, Piso 3
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 286 2649

**Salutation: Dear Minister Estupiñán /
 Estimado Sr. Ministro Estupiñán**

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

All the warring parties in Colombia's long-running armed conflict have repeatedly failed to respect the civilian population's right not to be dragged into the conflict and have been responsible for serious human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. Amnesty International has repeatedly called on both sides in the conflict – guerrilla groups and the security forces – to put an immediate and unconditional end to human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law.

ASODECAS is campaigning to defend the right to life, dignity, land tenure and sojourn on the territory, for the civilian population living in Alto Sinú, an area where the armed conflict has had catastrophic consequences for the civilians living there.

Name: Elmer Antonio Serna Usuaga (m), Emel Antonio Varela Tuberquia (m) and members of ASODECAS

Gender m/f: both

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