

via fax: 011 571 596 0631 Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 283 9876 Sr. Ministro Juan Fernando Cristo Minister of Interior of Colombia
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September 22, 2016

Dear Sirs:

We are saddened and angered at the murder of peasant farmer leader **Cecilia Coicue**, age 62, in the village of Cominera, municipality of Corinto in Cauca Department. On September 7 she was found dead of multiple stab wounds on her farm, which is in an area designated by the peace agreement as a transitory zone in which a UN mission will oversee the demobilization of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).

Cecilia Coicue, a prominent activist, was a member of the National Unitary Federation of Agricultural Workers Unions (FENSUAGRO), the Marcha Política (Patriotic March, a social and political movement), the Association of Rural Workers of the Rural Reserve Zone of Corinto (ANZORC), and the Process for Popular Unity of Southwest Colombia (PUPSOC). She was last seen going to the local water source the day before her death.

Her murder is particularly troubling because it occurred only a week after the bilateral cease-fire between the two sides of the country's five-decade armed conflict. While we believe the beginning of the cease-fire marked a historic step toward peace in Colombia, we are deeply concerned that rural leaders are still being assassinated. This is an important reminder of the difficulties being faced in truly ending the violence and impunity that have been such permanent occurrences in the five decades-long civil war.

Therefore we **strongly urge you to**

- immediately and thoroughly investigate the murder of Cecilia Coicue, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- honor the commitments made as part of the peace accords;
- take definitive actions to especially protect the rural, indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities from those who threaten them with paramilitary terrorism.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai and Christine Stonebraker-Martinez
 Co-Coordinators

copies: Juan Carlos Pinzón, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
 Andy O'Neal, Human Rights Officer, US Embassy in Colombia ~ via email
 John Brandt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via email
 José de Jesús Orozco Hernández, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3650
 Paulo Vannuchi, Rapporteur for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3650
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

AFGJ 09/12/2016_Colombia

The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: