

via fax: 011 57 1 337 5890 Sr. Alvaro Uribe Velez President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 444 2158 Dr. Francisco Santos Calderon Vice President of the Republic of Colombia
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November 4, 2009

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are once again seriously concerned for the welfare and safety of the leaders and members of indigenous communities and their families in the north of Cauca Department. We are especially disturbed by threats from a paramilitary group to kill six individuals and members of five organizations in western Colombia. The six individuals are: **José Goyes, Licifredy Arara, Meraldino Cabiche, Plutarco Mina, Eduar Villegas, and Diego Escobar**. The threatened human rights organizations are: **Social Research and Action Association (NOMADESC), the Community Council of La Toma** in Suarez municipality, the **Town Council of Suarez municipality, Black Communities Process (PCN), the Valle del Cauca office of the Trade Union Congress CUT**. All of these, as well as the **Indigenous Community of Cerro Tijeras** are, in grave danger

The threat on October 22 came in a fax signed by the paramilitary group Black Eagles New Generation and sent to the Valle del Cauca office of the Trade Union Congress (CUT). It said that the people and organizations named were now military targets. The fax accused those named of supporting the guerrillas and of stopping the economic development of the Cauca region. In the past, human rights, social, trade union and indigenous activists and leaders who have been labeled subversives by the security forces or paramilitary groups have often been the target of subsequent serious human rights violations, including killings.

Some of the organizations and individuals have been harassed since shortly before the fax was sent. One of them, José Goyes, received a telephone death threat the same day. In recent years José Goyes has been subject to death threats and has survived an attempt on his life (see our letter of 7/2/2009). Men were also seen keeping watch on the NOMADESC office in Cali from October 20 to 23 and again on October 28.

Again we **strongly urge that you:**

- order a full and impartial investigation into the death threat sent to CUT Valle del Cauca on October 22, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- immediately provide protection for those threatened, as agreed to by those in danger;
- take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: NOMADESC ~ via US mail
CUT Valle ~ via US mail
Carolina Barco Isakson, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
William Brownfield, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.315.2197
Nan N. Fife, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173
Javier Hernández Valencia, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Colombia office ~ via fax: 011.571.658-3300
Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

UA 293/09_Colombia

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