

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631 <b>Sr. Juan Manuel Santos</b> President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 599 8961 <b>Sr. Germán Vargas Lleras</b> Minister of the Interior of Colombia
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November 3, 2011

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for **William Carupia Cuñapa**, President of the Indigenous Organization of Antioquia (OIA), which represents indigenous communities in the Department of Antioquia. On October 18 he received an anonymous telephone call at his home that said: "Don't be stupid, messing around with that nonsense about reclaiming land for indigenous people, you are going to die and find yourself underground."

Because the leader of OIA does not currently have government-sponsored protection measures, we believe this threat raises serious concern about his safety. Over the last year there have been numerous threats and killings of human rights defenders who have attempted to secure the return of lands stolen by the state security forces and their paramilitary allies. Between 1980 and July 2010, over 6 million hectares were illegally appropriated or abandoned.

Therefore, **we strongly urge you to**

- launch a full and impartial investigation into the death threat against William Carupia Cuñapa, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- provide protection measures to guarantee the safety of William Carupia Cuñapa and other OIA members, according to their wishes.

We again remind you of your obligations to protect human rights defenders as specified in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai,  
Coordinator

CC: Organización Indígena de Antioquia ~ via US mail  
Gabriel Silva Luján, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643  
P. Michael McKinley, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600  
Terry Steers-Gonzalez, Senior Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173  
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992  
Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Colombia member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992  
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email  
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

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