

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631

Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos
President of Colombia

via fax: 011 57 5 340 45 24

Sr. José Antonio Segebre Berardinelli
Governor of Atlántico, Colombia

November 22, 2013

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about a death threat emailed on October 30 by paramilitaries to members of the Atlántico Department branch of the Colombian Trade Union Congress (CUT), Happy Childhood Foundation (FIF), the Association of Relatives United by a Single Sorrow (AFUSODO), the Atlántico branch of the Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CPDH), the Political Prisoners Solidarity Committee (CSPP) and the Association of Land Workers (ASOTRACAMPO). These organizations are part of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE). The threat, from the Rastrojos Urban Commands Barranquilla paramilitary group, declared several human rights defenders to be "military targets."

The majority of those named in the death threat are linked to El Tamarindo, Galapa Municipality in Atlántico Department. ASOTRACAMPO represents the families living in El Tamarindo who have peacefully occupied the land since 2001. There have been repeated attempts to force 130 families off the land, resulting in the forced eviction of some families in May and June of this year. On April 12, Narciso Enrique Tehrán Mejía, the son of the vice-president of ASOTRACAMPO, was shot dead as he slept (cf our letter of May 12, 2013). Also named in this recent death threat is **Martha Elena Díaz Ospina**, founder and president of AFUSODO, who received a funeral invitation on her doorstep on January 24 because of her support of families in El Tamarindo (cf our letter of Feb 11, 2013).

On October 31, members of MOVICE were informed of an eviction order for El Tamarindo planned for November 1. The eviction order was postponed pending further meetings with government authorities.

We **strongly urge** that you

- guarantee the safety of those named in the death threat, including the families of El Tamarindo, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- order full and impartial investigations into the death threats, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- ensure that the El Tamarindo community and its supporters can continue to campaign in safety for the recognition of their rights to the El Tamarindo land; and
- take action against paramilitary forces and break any links between them and the security forces, in line with repeated UN recommendations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

Copies: MOVICE ~ via US mail
First Secretary for Human Rights and Minorities, Embassy of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
Andrew Bowen, Interim Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600
Mary Brett Rogers-Springs, Senior Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.2628
José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

UA 103/13update_Colombia

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