

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631
President Juan Manuel Santos
 President of the Republic of Colombia

via fax: 011 57 1 261 6287
Sr. Andres Villamizar
 Director of Protection Unit of Ministry of Interior

July 6, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply distressed at the assassination attempt against **Andrés Narvaéz Reyes**, Vice-President of the Peasant Farmer Association La Europa in Ovejas Municipality, Sucre Department. On June 12 the foreman of a company claiming ownership of La Europa farm threatened and shot at Andrés Narvaéz Reyes. The foreman complained about the gate which the peasant farmers recently put up at the entrance to La Europa farm to ensure their safety. He said: "What's going on with you. . . I am going to kill you." He then fired at Andrés Narvaéz Reyes, who was hit four times and had to be taken to hospital.

The Peasant Farmer Association La Europa, is part of the Sucre branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE) in Sincelejo. In 1994, paramilitaries killed twelve peasant farmers and forcibly displaced 80 farmers from La Europa farm. Some peasant farmers who returned in 2010 have faced threats and harassment. Their homes have been burnt down repeatedly. On May 9, 2013 a pamphlet was received at La Europa farm accusing Argemiro Lara Barreto, a land restitution leader on La Europa, and Ingrid Vergara, member of MOVICE-Sucre, of having links to guerrilla fighters (cf our letter of June 11, 2013). On June 3, 2014 Jeison Pava and Ingrid Vergara received death threats (cf our letter of June 25, 2014). Although they have faced repeated death threats and attacks, the peasant farmers' request to the government for collective protection measures has not been granted.

The latest threats come at a critical moment in the legal process to return lands to peasant farmers, who are expecting a favorable ruling soon on a land restitution claim they made on La Europa farm in March 2013. Because of our concern for the safety of the Peasant Farmer Association La Europa we **strongly urge** that you

- ⤴ guarantee the safety of Andrés Narvaéz Reyes, peasant farmers of La Europa and other members of MOVICE-Sucre, in strict accordance with their needs and demands;
- ⤴ order a full and impartial investigations into the attack and threats against Andrés Narvaéz Reyes, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- ⤴ fulfill your obligations regarding the protection of human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator

Copies: MOVICE ~ via US mail
 Luis Carlos Villegas, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
 Kevin Whitaker, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600
 Olivia Franken, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.2628
 José de Jesús Orozco Hernández, 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, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

UA 154/14_Colombia

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