

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631

Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos
President of the Republic of Colombia

via fax 011 57 1 570 2000 ext 2023

Attorney General Eduardo Montealegre
Attorney General of Colombia

February 25, 2015

Dear Sirs:

We are very concerned about continuing death threats to human rights defender **Martha Elena Díaz Ospina** in Barranquilla, Atlántico Department. On February 8 a funeral wreath delivered to her home had an inscription that read "Rest in Peace Marta [sic] Diaz."

Martha Elena Díaz Ospina is the founder and President of the Association of Families United by a Single Sorrow (AFUSODO), an organization of family members of victims of extrajudicial executions and enforced disappearances. She is also member of the Atlántico branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE).

In late January, following a court order, the commander of the II Brigade of the army offered apologies in a public event for the extrajudicial execution of Martha Elena Díaz Ospina's son. He was one of four young men killed on April 2, 2006 in the municipality of San Juan del Cesar, La Guajira Department, by members of two army counter-guerrilla units. The victims were then presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Martha Elena Díaz Ospina rejected the apology because she claims that not all those responsible have been held to account and she is still waiting for truth, justice and reparation.

MOVICE is a broad coalition of civil society organizations campaigning for truth, justice and reparation for the victims of Colombia's internal armed conflict. Its members have a legal right to carry out their work in defense of human rights: documenting and exposing many killings and enforced disappearances carried out by the security forces and paramilitary groups. Nevertheless, its members are too often harassed, threatened and even killed for doing their legitimate human rights work. Our organization has written more than 30 letters to officials in Colombia over the past four years because of human rights crimes committed against MOVICE members.

This is our eighth letter to officials in Colombia since November 2012 because of threats to Martha Elena Díaz Ospina. Most recently, she was among many members of MOVICE named in the mass death threats of January 11 and January 21, 2015 and December 18, 2014 (cf our letters of Jan 22, Feb 1 and Feb 14, 2015).

Because we believe her life is in grave danger, we **strongly urge** that you

- order a full and impartial investigation into the death threat against her, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- provide protection for her, in strict accordance with her wishes and needs;
- fulfill your obligation to protect 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 1 202 232 8643

Kevin Whitaker, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax 011 571 275 4600

Eric Falls, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Dept. ~ via fax 1 202 647 2628

Jose de Jesus Orozco Henriquez, Rapporteur for Colombia and Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, via fax 1 202 458 3650

US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

UA_28/14update_Colombia

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