

Fax: 011 57 1 596 0631
Juan Manuel Santos
 President of Colombia

Fax: 011 57 1 570 2000
Eduardo Montealegre
 Attorney General of Colombia

August 2, 2015

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned for the safety and well-being of **Claudia Mabel Palacios** of the El Palmar area of Dagua Municipality in the Department of Valle del Cauca. Her son, 19-year old Hafith Rios Palacios, was forcibly disappeared in March 2014. On June 25, a man who called on her mobile phone told her she had eight days to leave the area where she lives. He said "they did not want to see her there anymore" and that she should stop looking for her son if she did not want to suffer a tragedy worse than what had befallen him.

Claudia Mabel Palacios is part of a group of families of people who have been subjected to enforced disappearance in Valle del Cauca. A few days before the threatening phone call, she visited the area of El Palmar where she thought her son might be buried. This may indicate that those responsible for the disappearance of Hafith Rios Palacios are still present, or in control of the area.

This is one of the latest incidents of repeated threats against relatives of leaders from human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who campaign for justice and endeavor to discover the whereabouts of disappeared relatives. As of June 1, 2015 the state's Unit for Attention and Reparation of Victims (UARIV) had recorded over 45,000 enforced disappearances since 1985.

Because we believe Claudia Mabel Palacios is in serious danger, we **strongly urge you** to:

- order full and impartial investigations into the threatening phone call of June 25 described above, and take all necessary measures that Claudia Mabel Palacios and her family deem appropriate to guarantee their safety;
- recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to receive and consider communications on this and other cases from or on behalf of victims or other states parties to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
- ensure that the National Commission for the Search for People Subjected to Enforced Disappearance publishes the results of the implementation of urgent search mechanisms requested by the Office of the Procurator General on January 22 2015.

Sincerely,

Christine Stonebraker-Martinez
 Co-Coordinator

CC: Fundación Nydia Erika Bautista ~ via mail
 Juan Carlos Pinzón, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
 Adam Lenert, Human Rights Officer, US Embassy in Colombia ~ via email
 Tabatha Fairclough, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via email
 José de Jesús Orozco Hernández, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3650
 US Senators Brown & Portman
 US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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