

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631 Juan Manuel Santos President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax 011 57 1 570 2000 ext 2023 Eduardo Montealegre Attorney General of Colombia
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August 16, 2015

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about recent threats to **Nicolasa Díaz Ortiz**, Executive Director of the Association of Children and Youth Moyas Workshop House (Casa Taller), a community organization in the San Luis northeastern Chapinero neighborhood of Bogotá. It provides a space for children and young people to study or carry out other activities in an area that lacks social amenities. She is also a founding member and board member of the Association for Social Research and Action (NOMADESC) an organization which aims to promote inclusion, community empowerment and development by giving a voice to isolated rural communities at risk of displacement.

On July 23 at 9:43pm, Nicolasa Díaz Ortiz received a call on her land-line phone from an unidentified man who cursed at her with a distorted voice. In a call at 9:46pm a male voice said, "We are calling from the San Gabriel funeral home and we would like to inform you that we have been watching your house and we know that you're going to die soon." The telephone line at Nicolasa Díaz Ortiz's home had just been repaired the day of the calls after being out of service for two and a half months.

On May 16, a group of unknown individuals broke into the Casa Taller. The incident was reported to the police, and members of the Immediate Attention Commands (CAI) were dispatched to the address. However, they did not carry out any analysis of the scene. They only advised Nicolasa Díaz to secure the property better and to file a complaint.

Following complaints from several organizations that support Casa Taller, Colonel Raúl Verá Moreno was assigned to the case. On May 17 he visited the organization, made some inquiries and organized several searches on neighboring properties. That night at 11:00pm, Raúl Verá Moreno, accompanied by two patrol cars and three police motorcycles, arrived at the home of Nicolasa Díaz with a suspect whom he asked her to identify. This placed her at great risk of retaliation. It is not clear why police did not conduct an anonymous identification line-up at the police station. On May 18 and 19, further searches were carried out on the orders of Colonel Verá Moreno. On June 13, a complaint was filed against him on the basis of various irregularities in the investigation, including exposing the witness to risk of violent retaliation.

Nicolasa Díaz Ortiz, together with other members of the board of NOMADESC, was awarded precautionary security measures by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in 2004 as a result of ongoing threats against them. Despite their attempts to have the precautionary measures implemented by the State, none of the board members are currently receiving any protection. Because we believe they are at serious risk, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate, impartial and thorough investigation into the death threats against Nicolasa Díaz Ortiz, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the security of Nicolasa Díaz Ortiz and other members of the Casa Taller and NOMADESC.

Sincerely,

Christine Stonebraker-Martinez
 Co-coordinator

cc: Luis Carlos Villegas, 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 and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Frontline 7/30/15_Colombia

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