

via fax: 011 571 596 0631 <b>Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos</b> President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 <b>Sr. Fiscal General Eduardo Montealegre</b> Attorney General of Colombia
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December 12, 2015

Dear Sirs:

We are shocked to learn that **Daniel Abril**, a member of the Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE), was killed on November 13 in a bakery in his home town of Trinidad, in Casanare Department. He was one of the most prominent voices against reported human rights abuses committed by oil companies in Casanare Department.

On November 16, an unidentified man followed **María Cardona Mejía**, the technical secretary of the Caldas Department chapter of MOVICE. She heard him say on the phone “when I was in the military, massacres were what we did, like what I am going to do to this blond girl and her boss.” María Cardona has previously received several threatening calls which mentioned Dario Ecsehomo Díaz, her “boss” at MOVICE-Caldas.

MOVICE is a national human rights organization working with victims of the armed conflict, monitoring and seeking justice for human rights violations committed by the State and paramilitaries. Daniel Abril and other members of MOVICE have been the subject of threats and other forms of harassment. Since 2008, we have written more than 40 letters to officials in the Colombian government about assassinations and threats to MOVICE members. The most recent event included a campaign which distributed threatening pamphlets against members of MOVICE (cf our letter of Nov 24).

MOVICE has also reported that a significant number of its members have been affected by the elimination, reduction, or failure to implement the protection measures granted by the National Protection Unit (UNP) over the past months, including the following:

- reduction of protection measures for Juan David Díaz, who has received seven death threats this year alone, most recently in October;
- failure to implement effective protective measures for Martha Lucía Giraldo, technical secretary of MOVICE-Valle del Cauca, leading to the protection measures being suspended in February;
- delay in completing a risk analysis for Rocío Campos, technical secretary of MOVICE-Magdalena Medio, and for Jaime Pena, a member of the same chapter.

Because the situations described above endanger the safety of MOVICE’s members and affect their ability to carry out their legitimate work defending human rights, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the assassination of Daniel Abril and the death threat against María Cardona Mejía, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the security of María Cardona Mejía, Dario Ecsehomo Díaz, Juan David Díaz, Martha Lucía Giraldo, Rocío Campos, Jaime Pena and other members of MOVICE;
- implement and strengthen protective measures, in coordination and with the participation of human rights defenders

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai and Christine Stonebraker Martínez  
Co-Coordinator

copies: Luis Carlos Villegas, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643  
 Andy O’Neal, Human Rights Officer, US Embassy in Colombia ~ via email onealRA@state.gov  
 John Brandt, 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

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

