

via fax: 011 571 596 0631
Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos
President of the Republic of Colombia

via fax: 011 57 1 283 9876
Sr. Ministro Juan Fernando Cristo
Minister of Interior of Colombia

September 21, 2016

Dear Sirs:

We are writing to express our deep concern for the safety of human rights defender **Rocío Campos**, a member of the Magdalena Medio chapter of Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE). On September 6, Rocío Campos was attacked in the city of Barrancabermeja in Santander Department by two armed men on a motorcycle, in what appeared to be an assassination attempt.

On September 6 at approximately 6:30pm as Rocío Campos rode her motorcycle in Barrancabermeja, another motorcycle with two male passengers approached her and pushed her off the road. After failing to knock her down, one of the attackers pointed a gun at her. She was able to reach the nearest police station 100 meters away without being harmed. She alerted the police officers to the fact that the attackers were close by, but the police did not pursue them. They interrogated Rocío Campos, recommended that she "take great care" while traveling and refused to escort her home.

This assassination attempt against Rocío Campos is the latest incidence of the death threats, attacks and assassinations that local paramilitary groups have made against members of MOVICE and other grassroots social movements in Colombia. Since 2008 we have written more than forty letters to Colombian government officials about these atrocities. According to the non-governmental organization Somos Defensores, 50 human rights defenders have been murdered since January, including thirteen grassroots human rights defenders in Antioquia, César, Cauca and Nariño who have been assassinated since the final peace agreement between the State and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) was unveiled on August 26, 2016.

We believe that Colombia has embarked on a new path with the signing of this peace accord, but if it is to lead to long-term stability and justice for all Colombians, the active, free and safe participation of human rights defenders in rebuilding the country is critical. Therefore we **strongly urge** that you

- take all necessary measures, in consultation with Rocío Campos, to guarantee her security as well as that of her family and members of MOVICE;
- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the attacks against Rocío Campos, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- guarantee that all human rights defenders in Colombia are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.

Sincerely,

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

copies: Juan Carlos Pinzón, 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 and for Human Rights Defenders, 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 9/14/16_ Colombia

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