

via fax: 011 571 596 0631 Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 Sr. Fiscal General Eduardo Montealegre Attorney General of Colombia
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November 24, 2016

Dear Sirs:

We are devastated by the recent surge in attacks and killings of human rights defenders that have occurred during the renegotiation of Colombia's peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). These include

- November 1 - **John Jairo Rodriguez**, age 33, father of four, leader of the Peasants' Association, was assassinated in Caloto municipality in Cauca Department.
- November 11 - **Jose Antonio Velasco**, age 22, social leader in his community, died from a gunshot wound in Calota in Cauca Department after visiting his mother in the village of El Pilamo.
- November 18 - **Erley Monroy**, age 54, director of the Farmers' Association Losada-Guayabero (ASCAL-G), died of wounds inflicted by unknown attackers in the municipality of San Vicente del Caguán in Caquetá Department. He opposed the oil extraction method of fracking in nearby La Macarena in Meta Department. Shortly before his death he had denounced the renewed activity of paramilitary groups in the area. He had also been the target of a smear campaign by Humberto Sánchez, the mayor of San Vicente del Caguán, who claimed that Erley Monroy was using his organization to extort people on behalf of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).
- November 18 - **Didier Losada**, age 28, president of the El Platanillo Neighbors' Association in La Macarena, Meta Department, was shot and killed in front of his family by two men who had stormed into his home.
- November 19 - **Hugo Cuéllar**, age 50, was seriously wounded on his way home from the funeral of his cousin, Erley Monroy, when two unknown assailants shot him five times. He is also a member of ASCAL-G and the Foundation for the Defense of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law in Eastern and Middle Colombia (DHOC).
- November 19 - **Danilo Bolaños Díaz**, a member of the Association of Farm Workers in Nariño Department (ASTRACAN), and his partner were returning home from an event in La Unión, which was organized by the National Association of Farmers' Reserve Zones (ANZORC); two men on a motorcycle shot at them six times. Fortunately they escaped unharmed.
- November 19 - **Rodrigo Cabrera Cabrera**, age 39, peasant leader and member of the Patriotic March Movement in Nariño Department, was assassinated when he was shot 16 times by two men as he traveled home in a taxi.

Protecting and supporting human rights defenders is a crucial step on the path for a long-lasting peace in Colombia. We **strongly urge** that you

- conduct thorough and impartial investigations into the killings and attacks described above, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- adopt a preventative and effective approach for the protection of human rights defenders that is flexible and responsive to the changing risks faced by them.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

and

Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

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 José de Jesús Orozco Hernández, Rapporteur for Colombia and 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_11/23/2/16_Colombia

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