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October 25, 2018

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned about threats to human rights defender **Malena Mariet Martínez Montoya**, a member of the Sucre branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE). She was threatened at the dental clinic where she works in Sincelejo, Sucre Department.

On October 19 the lock to the dental clinic office was broken and the office ransacked. Nothing was stolen, but the police found a threatening note which read: "Malena, you see that we can get to you." It was signed by AGC (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia), one of the largest paramilitary groups in Colombia.

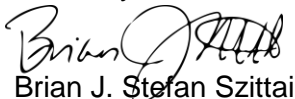
MOVICE is a coalition of more than 200 human rights organizations in fifteen departments. Since 2005 they have been monitoring human rights violations committed in the context of the armed conflict and calling for state agents and paramilitaries to be brought to justice.

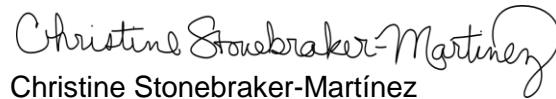
This is the latest in a series of threats against Malena Mariet Martínez Montoya. In 2006 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights granted precautionary measures to her and other MOVICE members because of multiple threats against them. In June 2013, she, her husband, and another family member were informed of a plan to kill them. Since January 2018, Malena Martínez and other colleagues from MOVICE-Sucre have been accompanying a case in La Guaripa in which three brothers were killed as a result of a land conflict. She has received three threatening phone messages stating that she should stop accompanying the victims of La Guaripa and that, if she does not comply, she, her family, and the victims would all be killed.

MOVICE has collected evidence of more than 130 serious threats and attacks against its members since its creation in 2006. Since 2008, we have written more than 40 letters to Colombian authorities concerning killings, attempted killings, break-ins, threats to family members, judicial harassment, prosecution, arrests and various forms of intimidation of MOVICE members. We condemn this latest incident and **strongly urge** you to:

- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the break-in at the workplace of Malena Martínez and the threats made against her, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the security of Malena Martínez, her family, and all MOVICE members, in coordination and agreement with them;
- guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator


Christine Stonebraker-Martínez

copies: Francisco Santos Calderón, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643 and email
Rebecca Daley, Human Rights Officer, US Embassy in Colombia ~ via email
Ryan Reid and Christine Russell, Desk Officers for Colombia, US State Dept ~ via email
Francisco José Eguiguren Praeli, Rapporteur for Colombia and Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Oct 24_FrontlineDefenders_Colombia

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

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