

via email: contacto@presidencia.gov.co
Excmo. Sr. Presidente Iván Duque Márquez
President of the Republic of Colombia

via email: despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co
Sr. Fiscal General Néstor Humberto Martínez Neira
Attorney General of Colombia

November 25, 2018

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the murder, on November 4, of **Edilberto Niño Cristancho**, a senior leader of the National Union of Workers in the Cooking Fats and Food Industry (SINTRAIMAGRA), in Villavicencio in Meta Department.

Two men attacked Niño Cristancho as he got into a taxi in Villavicencio. He died of multiple stab wounds. Edilberto Niño Cristancho was working with the Central Workers Union (CUT) to ensure that palm companies fully comply with workers' constitutional and legal rights and with International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions concerning the right of workers to form unions and bargain contracts.

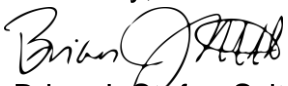
Palm oil workers in Colombia are part of a global supply chain for household products and cosmetics. They are forced to work long hours in hazardous conditions without adequate safety equipment or protection from contact with acutely toxic chemicals such as paraquat.

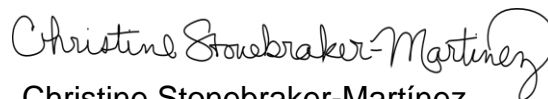
According to the National Trade Union School, 14 union members were murdered, six were physically attacked and 134 threatened with violence between January 1 and the end of August of this year. Perpetrators are rarely punished.

We are quite concerned about the dangerous situation faced by labor leaders in Colombia. We **strongly urge** that you

- conduct an immediate and complete investigation into the death of Edilberto Niño Cristancho, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- provide security guarantees to union members and union leaders, in strict accordance with their wishes

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
US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Justice for Colombia_Nov 7 2018_Colombia

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