

via email: contacto@presidencia.gov.co <b>Excmo. Sr. Presidente Iván Duque Márquez</b> President of the Republic of Colombia	via email: despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co <b>Sr. Fiscal General Néstor Humberto Martínez Neira</b> Attorney General of Colombia
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February 25, 2019

Dear Sirs:

We are horrified at the recent attack on **Dibeth Quintana**, a leader of the Oil Workers' Union (USO) in Aguachica Municipality, Cesar Department. On February 13, after she attended a judicial proceeding in the Public Prosecutor's Office in Aguachica, strangers abducted her, beat her, tied her hands and feet, and abandoned her on the outskirts of the municipality. She was treated in a local medical center for physical and emotional trauma.


This is the latest instance of constant harassment and hostile actions against Dibeth Quintana for her union organizing activity. The police have regularly intercepted her movements under various pretexts. She and her family suffer harassment and threatening phone calls.

On May 27, 2016, she was unable to enter the Barrancabermeja oil refinery to perform her trade union duties because her union card was blocked. As she tried to enter, guards and members of the National Police responsible for security attacked and brutally beat her. She was subsequently hospitalized for her injuries. Neither Ecopetrol (the state-owned oil company) nor the Attorney General's Office did an investigation of the incident, and nobody was prosecuted. Ecopetrol has consistently refused to provide effective protection mechanisms for her.

We **strongly urge** that you

- investigate the February 13 abduction and beating of Dibeth Quintana, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice
- investigate the possible participation of Ecopetrol's security officers and the police in the systematic hostility against Dibeth Quintana
- provide effective protection mechanisms for Dibeth Quintana and her family, in strict accordance with their wishes
- guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Colombia, including labor leaders, 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-Martinez

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  
 Soledad García Muñoz, Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email  
 US Senators Brown & Portman  
 US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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