

<p>via email: <a href="mailto:contacto@presidencia.gov.co">contacto@presidencia.gov.co</a> <b>Excmo. Sr. Presidente Iván Duque Márquez</b> President of the Republic of Colombia</p>	<p>via email: <a href="mailto:despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co">despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co</a> <b>Sr. Fiscal General Néstor Humberto Martínez Neira</b> Attorney General of Colombia</p>
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April 23, 2019

Dear Sirs,

We are writing to express our deep concern and sorrow over the assassination of agricultural labor leader **Policarpo Guzmán Mage**, a trade unionist and human rights activist who was murdered in Argelia, in Cauca Department.

On April 10, after he left for work on his motorbike, witnesses heard shots. A short time later his body was found with at least twelve gunshot wounds. His motorcycle, cell phone and cash were not taken, indicating that robbery was not the motive and pointed to the strong possibility that he was targeted specifically for his social action.

**Policarpo** was a member of the National Federation of Unified Agricultural Workers Unions (FENSUAGRO). He also co-founded the Peasant Workers Association of Argelia and the human rights network Francisco Isaias Cifuentes. He was a member of the National Association of Campesino Reserve Zones, the Popular Unity Process of the Colombian Southwest, and the Social Coordination and Policy of the Cauca Patriotic March movement. His activism established Policarpo Guzmán Mage as one of the historic leaders of the Colombia Campesino movement.


Policarpo was also a vocal critic of paramilitary presence in, and displacement of peasant communities. He himself was a victim of forced displacement; during the armed conflict, paramilitaries working with the army forced him and his family to leave his home in Cauca. He returned two years ago. He received many threats of violence, eventually appealing to the state for his personal protection, which the state never provided.

His death follows that of other FENSUAGRO members killed this year: Wilmer Antono Mirando on January 4 (cf our letter of January 12) and Dilio Corpus Guetio on January 28 (cf our letter of February 1). They are among 500 social leaders and human rights defenders who have been killed since the peace deal was signed in 2016.

We **strongly urge you to**

- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the killing of Policarpo Guzmán Mage, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- investigate reports of death threats and other forms of intimidation against human rights defenders and adopt immediate measures to ensure their protection.

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinators

  
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 mail  
US Senators Brown & Portman ~via email  
US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

JFC\_3/28/19\_Colombia

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