

<p>via email: contacto@presidencia.gov.co Excmo. Sr. Presidente Iván Duque Márquez President of the Republic of Colombia</p>	<p>via email: despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co Sr. Fabio Espitia Garzón Attorney General of Colombia</p>
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December 22, 2019

Dear Sirs:

We are shocked at three assassinations that occurred during the national strike that started on November 21.

December 2 - Two unidentified attackers killed **Manuel Santos Yatacue** as he walked with his partner near the Elvira reincorporation zone in Buenos Aires in Cauca Department. Elvira is one of 24 areas where former members of FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) are based as they transition to civil society under the terms of the 2016 peace agreement. Manuel Santos Yatacue was a member of one of the local collectives establishing coffee production. Illegal armed groups, opposed to the peace process, are still vying for control over the illegal gold mining activities that continue there.

December 3 - Two hitmen assassinated **José Humberto Rodríguez**, the mayor-elect of Sutatausa in Cundinamarca Department. He had not reported any death threats and there are no reported illegal armed groups in the area. Lawsuits from his former rivals were the only indication of anything out of the ordinary.

December 3 - Several armed men attacked community leader **Elicerio Mendoza** and his wife as they rode their moped in San Vicente Del Caguan in Caquetá Department. Mendoza was killed, but his wife survived the attack. He was the community leader of the Casas Grandes hamlet and the treasurer of a local project to build a road. The area is a former FARC stronghold.

The ongoing political violence has put a strain on the peace process and is one of the reasons behind the anti-government protests. We **strongly urge** that you

- take immediate steps to implement the peace process that includes security guarantees for social leaders and demobilized FARC combatants
- continue dialog and negotiations with strike leaders to reach a just settlement for all involved.

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
Christine Russell, Desk Officer 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
Justice for Colombia ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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