

<p><b>Excmo. Sr. Presidente Gustavo Petro Urrego</b> President of the Republic of Colombia <a href="mailto:contacto@presidencia.gov.co">contacto@presidencia.gov.co</a></p>	<p><b>Sr. Fiscal Francisco Barbosa Delgado</b> Attorney General of Colombia <a href="mailto:despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co">despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co</a></p>
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March 26, 2023

Dear Sirs:

We are writing with concern for the Nasa Indigenous people of the Department of Valle del Cauca, who suffered attacks on the mornings of March 15 and March 16, 2023.

On March 15, a cylinder with dynamite was installed in the middle of a communication route 50 meters from the checkpoint of the Indigenous guard in the Crucero sector, ancestral territory of Nuevo Horizonte, Florida Valle municipality. It is understood that the device was put in place by the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) dissident Mobile Columns Dagoberto Ramos and Adan Izquierdo.


The next morning, on March 16, Nasa Indigenous leader **María Raquel Trujillo Mestizo** was traveling with a protection team of the UNP (National Protection Unit) and was intercepted on the road in La Diana township in the Los Colorados sector, precisely where the paved road ends. A police officer appeared with a group of people who wore camouflage, identifying themselves as the Marquetalia group, threatening María Raquel Trujillo Mestizo and her team with weapons. The UNP security team surrendered its weapons and exited the UNP vehicle before it was set on fire. María Raquel Trujillo Mestizo and her team were rescued by the Indigenous guard.

María Raquel Trujillo Mestizo is the former Nasa Indigenous governor and former sub-secretary for ethnic affairs. She and other members of the Nasa Indigenous community of Florida Valle are subject to repeated attacks, keeping their lives and livelihoods under threat. María Raquel Trujillo Mestizo has previously denounced threats by illegal armed groups that operate in the zone, such as FARC dissidents, ELN (National Liberation Army) and paramilitaries.

We urge that:

- the Office of the Attorney General of Colombia conduct an investigation into the attack on María Raquel Trujillo Mestizo, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- the governments of Valle del Cauca and the Municipality of Florida work with the Public Ministry to implement urgent measures within the framework of the Constitution and guarantee human rights
- the national and departmental and municipal governments ensure that the right to social protest, as articulated in Article 37 of the national Constitution, be upheld during any public mobilizations by the Nasa people to protest the ongoing challenges to their community: threats, persecution, violation of rights, and the presence of armed actors

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinator

  
Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Alfonso Prada Gil, Ministro del Interior ~ via email  
Luis Gilberto Murillo, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email, US mail  
Walter Camilo Murcia Lozano, Secretary for Coexistence and Citizen Security of Valle del Cauca ~ via email  
Joel Hernández García, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email, US mail  
Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (IACHR) ~ via email, US mail  
UN: Juliette De Rivero, Representative in Colombia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email  
US Embassy: Francisco Palmieri (Chargé d'Affaires, ad interim); Sandra Lee (human rights); Mariel Chatman (vulnerable populations) ~ via email  
US State Department: Christine Russell, Desk Officer for Colombia ~ via email  
US Senators from Ohio: Brown & Vance and US Representatives from Ohio: Balderson, Beatty, Brown, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Sykes ~ via email

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