

<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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April 25, 2023

Dear Sirs:

We are saddened to hear of yet another attack against an environmental defender. On March 28, community leader and fisherman **Alirio Perdomo** was shot twice in an attempted assassination by two unknown men on a motorcycle in the municipality of Hobo, Huila Department.


Alirio Perdomo is one of the leaders of the Association of People Affected by the El Quimbo Hydroelectric Project (ASOQUIMBO) and president of the Association of Calandrero Fishermen of the Magdalena River in Hobo. He has participated as a leader and spokesperson in multiple community actions and protests about the effects suffered by artisanal fishers due to the hydroelectric project, which is operated by the electric company Enel Colombia. On March 14, he and other members of ASOQUIMBO participated in a rally on the International Day of Struggle against Dams in Puerto Seco on the Magdalena River, north of El Quimbo. On March 28 at 5pm, he published a video publicly denouncing the levels of fish mortality in the Betania dam and the negative impacts on artisanal fishers due to "controlled discharges" from El Quimbo. Two hours later, while on his way into Hobo, two men on a motorcycle shot at him, hitting his ear in an attempt to murder him.

Over 8,500 acres of lands belonging to and crucial for the communities of Huila have been flooded for the construction of the hydroelectric power plant since September 2008 when the government of Colombia declared that the use of that land was necessary for the construction of El Quimbo. ASOQUIMBO and artisanal fishers in Huila have been protesting the El Quimbo hydroelectric project ever since. Because of their efforts to have the State recognize the environmental and social impacts of the hydroelectric project, many ASOQUIMBO members have endured serious death threats and harassment, as well as the destruction of small crops on which the communities heavily depend. They have been asking the government to provide irrigation to farming communities who lost their land and to conduct a census of those affected by the project.

We express our deepest concerns about the attack on Alirio Perdomo, as well as the numerous other threats and acts of aggression towards members of ASOQUIMBO, and we **strongly urge you to:**

- conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the attempted assassination of Alirio Perdomo, publish the results, and hold accountable those responsible for the attack
- take all measures needed to ensure the safety of Alirio Perdomo and his family, as well as all other members of ASOQUIMBO, in strict accordance with their wishes
- suspend all construction and operations of the El Quimbo hydroelectric project until a mutual agreement on the dimensions of the project is decided with the local impacted communities

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordínators

  
Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Luis Gilberto Murillo, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email, US mail  
Joel Hernández García, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email, US mail  
ASOQUIMBO: Asociación de Afectados por el Proyecto Hidroeléctrico El Quimbo ~ via email  
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) ~ 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:**