

<p>Excmo. Sr. Presidente Gustavo Petro Urrego President of the Republic of Colombia contacto@presidencia.gov.co</p>	<p>Sra. Luz Adriana Camargo Attorney General of Colombia despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co</p>
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April 21, 2024

Dear President Petro and Attorney General Camargo:

We are deeply distressed over the assassinations of **Nallely Sepúlveda** and **Edison David**, two members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, in the Urabá region of Antioquia Department.

In the afternoon of March 19, Nallely Sepúlveda and Edison David, age 14, were at their home on the Las Delicias farm in the La Esperanza *vereda* (small rural settlement) of the Peace Community when armed intruders shot them in the head. Nallely was the wife and Edison was the young brother of the humanitarian coordinator of the Peace Community. Their bodies were found by Nayeli's three children. The community wrapped the bodies in hammocks and transported them by mule for six hours to be examined after the State failed to come to the scene of the crime.

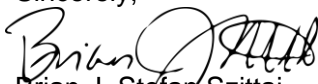
Days before her murder at a meeting in the office of the mayor of Apartadó, Nallely expressed the community's opposition to the construction of an illegal road on the Las Delicias farm because it is a protected zone at risk for deforestation. Residents say that the 17th Army Brigade took over community land without proper permits and is using machinery from the Engineering Battalion. Road construction is likely to benefit transnational corporations; there is a container port being built nearby and a coal deposit under the community's property that the state permitted for extraction many years ago.

Residents live under constant threat of violence from the large presence of paramilitaries and drug cartels. Several weeks ago, fences surrounding Las Delicias were cut up by chainsaws and set on fire. The Peace Community was the subject of slander campaign on social media. Just one day before Nallely Sepúlveda was assassinated, the minister of agriculture agreed that protection measures should be implemented for residents of the collective farm. Four days after her murder, Peace Community members were being forcibly displaced from La Resbalosa and Las Delicias.

The farming families of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó have suffered many tragedies over the past 27 years: hundreds of murders, sexual violence, massive displacements, destruction of homes, usurpation of land, and burning of crops. We call upon your integrity and humanity to:

- carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the intellectual and material actors in the double assassination of Nallely Sepúlveda and Edison David, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- review the various precautionary and protective measures ordered since 1997 for the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the Constitutional Court of Colombia
- in consultation with community leaders, offer protection measures to members of the Peace Community

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator


Christine L. Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Luis Fernando Velasco Chaves, Minister of Interior ~ via email
Luis Gilberto Murillo Urrutia, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email, US mail
José Luis Caballero Ochoa, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (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); Adam Levy (human rights) ~ via email
US State Department: Desk Officer for Colombia ~ via email
US Senators from Ohio: Brown & Vance and US Representatives from Ohio: Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Sykes ~ via email

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