

<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>	<b>Sra. Luz Adriana Camargo</b> Attorney General of Colombia <a href="mailto:despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co">despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co</a>
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August 24, 2025

Dear President Petro and Attorney General Camargo:

We are writing to express our concern over the violent attack committed against **Estiben Torres**, coordinator of the Indigenous Guard for the self-governed ancestral territory *U'h Wala Vxiç* (also known as Indigenous Reservation of Honduras) in Morales, Cauca Department).


At approximately 9:14 p.m. on June 25, Estiben Torres was leaving a community meeting at the "tulpa" sacred gathering space in the hamlet of Maco, traveling on a motorcycle. He was intercepted by armed men who signaled for him to stop. When he did not obey their request, they chased him and, upon reaching the urban area of Morales, they opened fire, wounding him in one of his lower extremities.

As the elected coordinator of the Indigenous Guard for *U'h Wala Vxiç*, Estiben Torres coordinates defense measures to prevent youth kidnappings and violations of land rights. Because the Indigenous Guard's work involves direct confrontation with armed groups, prominent members are often labeled "military targets." It is unclear to us whether the National Protection Unit (UNP) has allocated security detail specifically to Estiben Torres. According to CRIC (Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca), "the existing measures implemented by the UNP are inefficient and inadequate for the level of risk."

We urge that authorities in Colombia:

- (1) investigate, identify, and punish those responsible for the attack on Estiben Torres
- (2) consult with leaders of CRIC to strengthen security measures for the Indigenous communities of Cauca and their Indigenous Guards

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinators

  
 Christine L. Stonebraker-Martínez

copies: CRIC: Consejo Regional Indígena de Cauca / Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca ~ via email  
 Daniel García-Peña Jaramillo, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email  
 José Luis Caballero Ochoa, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email  
 Arif Bulkan, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email  
 UN: Scott Campbell, Representative in Colombia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email  
 US Embassy: John McNamara (Chargé d'Affaires); Adam Levy (human rights) ~ via email  
 US State Department: Desk Officer for Colombia ~ via email  
 US Senators from Ohio: Husted and Moreno ~ via email  
 US Representatives from Ohio: Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Rulli, Sykes ~ via email

25 JUN 2025\_CRIC\_Colombia

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