

Excmo. Sr. Presidente Gustavo Petro Urrego President of the Republic of Colombia contacto@presidencia.gov.co	Sra. Luz Adriana Camargo Attorney General of Colombia despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co
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May 24, 2026

Dear President Petro and Attorney General Camargo:

We write to you to express our distress over the killing of teacher and union leader **Paola Infante Jaimes** by public security forces, in Saravena, Arauca Department. Paola Infante Jaimes had served as director of the Atanasio Girardot Rural Education Center (based in the Barrancones village of Saravena) and belonged to the Arauca Educators Association (ASEDAR), where she advocated for rural education services.

On the afternoon of Sunday, April 19, in the La Esperanza neighborhood of Saravena, the armed rebel group National Liberation Army (ELN) attacked Colombian state security forces with explosives. Eight police officers were injured and were taken to the Sarare Hospital for medical treatment. According to Municipal Ombudsman José Luis Lasso Fontecha and several community residents, about 30 minutes later law enforcement indiscriminately fired on a pickup truck carrying Paola Infante Jaimes, causing injuries to her skull, chest, and upper extremities. She was treated at the same hospital but died on the morning of April 20 due to the severity of her injuries.

The National Police themselves issued a statement in which they reported that around 4:40 in the afternoon the armed attack occurred against a police unit that "was finishing activities at an educational establishment and was moving towards the police station." Social organizations and residents of Saravena agree in rejecting the use of schools and civilian facilities by the police for their own activities, especially considering the existence of armed conflict in the region. The Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman has issued early warnings for Saravena, citing escalating conflict between armed groups and severe risks to Indigenous communities and social leaders.

We strongly urge you to:

- (1) conduct a thorough investigation into the killing of Paola Infante Jaimes, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- (2) prohibit the use of schools and other civilian community centers by the police and military

Sincerely,



Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

copies: 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
UN: Scott Campbell, Representative in Colombia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email
US Embassy: Jarahn Hillsman (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 and US Representatives from Ohio: Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Rulli, Sykes ~ via email

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