

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631 Sr. Presidente Juan Manuel Santos President of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 599 8961 Sr. Germán Vargas Lleras Minister of the Interior and Justice of Colombia
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April 6, 2011

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Taskforce on Central America, are outraged at the killing of human rights defender **Eder Verbel Roicha**; we continue to be extremely concerned for the safety of MOVICE (National Movement of Victims of State Crimes) members **Cendy Torres Vergara** and her mother, **Ingrid Vergara**, of Sincelejo, Sucre Department. While in school on March 30, Cendy Torres received a call on her mobile phone telling her that she would end up dead on the road.

On March 10, 11, and 12, Cendy Torres participated in the fifth MOVICE national conference calling for an end to impunity. Her mother, Ingrid Vergara, one of the leaders of MOVICE in Sucre Department, has been campaigning against impunity in cases of human rights violations by paramilitary groups and on the issue of return of lands stolen during paramilitary operations.

This is our eighth letter in three years urging the Colombian government to protect members of MOVICE. We are outraged at the continuing attacks on their members, especially Cendy Torres and Ingrid Vergara:

March 23, 2011 Sucre Department MOVICE member, Eder Verbel Roicha, was killed.

October 12 2010 Ingrid Vergara avoided a possible attempt to kill her on Majagual Square in Sincelejo, thanks to one of her bodyguards. She was threatened again on November 20 and 25 2010.

December 1 2010 Two armed men entered Ingrid Vergara's house and forcefully removed the hard drive of a computer belonging to MOVICE (cf our letter of 12/12/10).

May 18 2010 Rogelio Martinez, another MOVICE leader in Sucre Department, was killed. He had been campaigning for displaced communities (cf our letter of 5/26/10).

February 5 2010 Two men on a motorcycle followed Ingrid Vergara, pulled up beside her, pointed a gun at her and drove away (cf our letter of 12/12/10);

October 26 2009 Cendy Torres received a death threat addressed to Ingrid Vergara (cf our letter of 12/1/09);

April 2 2008 Unknown men threatened to kill Cendy Torres.

Again, we strongly urge you to:

- guarantee the safety of Cendy Torres and Ingrid Vergara, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- order a full and impartial investigation into **ALL** threats against Ingrid Vergara, her daughter Cendy Torres and her colleagues, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- fulfill your obligations as laid out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: MOVICE ~ via US mail
Gabriel Silva Luján, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
P. Michael McKinley, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.315.0811
Terry Steers-Gonzalez, Senior Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Colombia member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
US Senators Brown and Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA 301/09 update_COLOMBIA

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