

via fax: 011 57 1 599 0631 Sr. Presidente Juan Manuel Santos President of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 599 8961 German Vargas Lleras Minister of the Interior of Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 ext 2023 Sra. Viviane Morales Attorney General of Colombia	

November 15, 2011

Dear Sirs and Madame:

We are deeply concerned for the safety and welfare of **Gersaín Rodríguez**, a member of the Nydia Erika Bautista Human Rights Foundation and one of the leaders of the families campaigning for information on forcibly disappeared relatives in Zarzal Municipality, Valle del Cauca Department. On October 30 when he was driving his motorbike, a car with three men forced him to stop, beat him and attempted to take him away, but he kept hold of his motorbike and fled. The men followed him until he encountered the local police commander and asked for help. The commander said that he could do nothing.

On October 31, a friend received a text message while she was with Gersaín Rodríguez which said: "Very happy with the triumph? You will be more happy when you see what we can do to Gersaín." When he went to the police the commander told him that he should not denounce the threat to the Attorney General's office.

On January 10, Gersaín Rodríguez witnessed the murder of his brother, Libardo Rodríguez, by paramilitaries. After one of the witnesses denounced the killing to the Office of the Attorney General, the witness received a call on his mobile phone from the alleged killer asking if "the death had hurt him much" and made a reference to the recent statements made to the Office of the Attorney General. In another call he was told "we are also going to kill you."

On June 19, 2003, the body of Gersaín Rodríguez's son, Gersaín Andrés Rodríguez, was found in Guarne Municipality, Antioquia Department, after being forcibly disappeared from his grandmother's house in Medellín. His brother's son, Julián Alberto Rodríguez López, was forcibly disappeared in 2006.

Since witnessing his brother's murder, Gersaín Rodríguez has repeatedly requested protection measures which have not been granted. We believe his life is in danger and **strongly urge** that you

- immediately take protective measures to guarantee his safety, according to his wishes;
- launch a full and impartial investigation into the attacks, threats and attempted kidnapping of Gersaín Rodríguez and the killing of Libardo Rodríguez, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate measures to protect those threatened, according to their wishes;
- take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break any links to the security forces, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: Gabriel Silva Luján, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
P. Michael McKinley, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600
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 & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

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