

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631 <b>Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos</b> President of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 ext. 2020/2023 <b>Estimado Sr. Eduardo Montealegre</b> Attorney General of Colombia
via U.S. mail <b>Estimado Sr. Andrés Villamizar</b> Director of National Protection Unit, Ministry of Interior	

July 11, 2012

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned for the safety of the following **13 human rights defenders and politicians** who received an email on July 3 from the paramilitary organization, Anti-Land Restitution Army (Ejército Anti-Restitución de Tierras), notifying them that they are “military targets” and that they will be killed:

- **Iván Cepeda**, Congressman and spokesperson for National Movement of Victims of the State (MOVICE)
- **Gloria Cuartas** and **Piedad Córdoba**, members of the Colombian Collective for Peace
- **Yessika Hoyos** and **Soraya Gutiérrez**, lawyers with the Colectivo José Alvear Restrepo (CCAJAR)
- **Diego Martínez** and **Jeison Paba Reyes**, Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CPDH)
- **Aida Quilcué**, Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC)
- **José Humberto Torres** and **Franklin Castañeda**, Political Prisoners Solidarity Committee (CSPP)
- **Pedro Geney**, member of the Sucre branches of MOVICE and H.I.J.O.S (Sons and Daughters for Memory and Against Impunity)
- **Lilia Solano**, President of the Justice and Life Project
- **Juan Díaz Chamorro**, leader of the Sucre branch of MOVICE and the son of Eudaldo Díaz, the assassinated mayor of El Roble.

The email, which included pictures of the 13 people, read, “13 guerrillas disguised as human rights defenders, 13 military targets.” It also said, “Our army has clear instructions to get rid of these bastards who want to take the land away from the good citizens to give it to guerrillas like themselves. Be warned and take note of the fact that we have you fully identified, your schemes and also bastard guerrillas who with the excuse of being a human rights defender seeks by all manner of arbitrariness to strip the land from its rightful owners so that it ends up in the hands of a handful of guerrilla bastards.”

Many of those named in the threat work in areas where people have supported claims for the return of their lands under the Victims and Land Restitution Law that became effective at the beginning of this year. Several such leaders have been killed since Congress approved the law in mid-2011.

Because we believe those named above and their organizations are in danger, we **strongly urge** you to:

- protect the safety of the thirteen people named above, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- order full and impartial investigations into the death threat, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links with the security forces, in line with stated government commitments to the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Coordinator

Copies: 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  
 José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA 190/12\_Colombia

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