

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631 <b>Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos</b> President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 ext 2023 <b>Sr. Eduardo Montealegre</b> Attorney General of Colombia
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July 25, 2013

Dear Sirs:

We are very very concerned about death threats to **Diego Martínez**, executive secretary of the Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CPDH) and to human rights lawyer **Jeison Paba**. On July 6 both men received an anonymous email while participating in the International Youth for Peace Event in the municipality of La Macarena in Meta Department. The email stated, "we have decided to declare you military objectives, to put an end to your criminal and terrorist activity, you who disguise as human rights defenders are no more than [guerrillas]." The death threat also warned that their families were not safe.

During the Youth for Peace Event, CPDH and other non-governmental human rights organizations proposed a campaign against strengthening the military justice system which has played a crucial role in guaranteeing impunity for many members of the security forces implicated in human rights violations. CPDH has also been representing those detained in several cases of mass arrests, as well as calling for disciplinary proceedings to be initiated against a senior police officer. Organizers of the Youth for Peace Event reported to the authorities the presence of monitors, but no action has been taken to identify them or to give a reason for monitoring the event.

Diego Martínez was one of 13 human rights defenders previously threatened by the Anti-Land Restitution Army (cf our letter of July 11, 2012). Jeison Paba has been representing peasant farmers of La Europa farm in Sucre Department who have filed a request for land restitution. Since June 2010 he has received five death threats from paramilitaries, including the Anti-Restitution Army (cf our letter of June 12 2012).

Since its founding in 1979, CPDH has been at the forefront of the struggle for the defense of human rights, focusing particularly on the protection of the civilian population caught in the crossfire of the armed conflict. Fifty-four of its leaders have been killed in retaliation for their human rights work.

Therefore we **strongly urge** that you

- ensure the safety of Diego Martínez and Jeison Paba, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- order an immediate, thorough, and impartial investigation into the death threats received by these CPDH members and their families, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- fulfill your obligations concerning the protection of human rights defenders according to the 1998 United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Coordinator

copies: CPDH ~ via U.S. mail  
 Gabriel Silva Luján, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643  
 P. Michael McKinley, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600  
 Mary Brett Rogers-Springs, Senior Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.2628  
 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, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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