

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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February 24, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned about the recent death threats to several persons who are candidates in the legislative elections scheduled for March 9. On February 4, the Black Eagles Capital Bloc (paramilitary organization) sent a death threat by email to the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective (**CCAJAR**) and to **Iván Cepeda**, a member of the Colombian Congress and of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (**MOVICE**). Iván Cepeda and **Alirio Uribe Muñoz**, the former president of CCAJAR, are candidates of the Polo Democrático Alternativo party. The death threat also named **Gustavo Petro**, the mayor of Bogotá, and **Aída Abella**, a candidate for the Unión Patriótica (UP) party. The threat called on the candidates to withdraw from the election to save their lives.

In recent weeks, paramilitaries have sent death threats to election candidates and members of opposition parties and movements in different parts of Colombia. On the day of the threat described above, the media reported that military intelligence was carrying out illegal surveillance and wiretapping a number of targets, including the Colombian peace negotiation teams in Cuba, Colombian nongovernmental organizations and political leaders. In previous years, illegal surveillance operations of this kind have been carried out in close cooperation with paramilitaries.

Because of our concern for the safety of Iván Cepeda, Alirio Uribe Muñoz, Aída Abella, Gustavo Petro, members of CCAJAR and MOVICE, and other candidates in the legislative elections, we **strongly urge** that you

- take action to guarantee their safety, in line with their wishes;
- order full and impartial investigations into the death threats, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice; and
- dismantle paramilitary organizations and break their links with government security forces, in line with repeated United Nations human rights recommendations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinator

CC: Jorge Armando Otealora, Human Rights Ombudsman, Colombia ~ via fax: 011 57 1 314 7300 ext 4000  
Luis Carlos Villegas, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643  
Andrew Bowen, Interim Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600  
Olivia Franken, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.2628  
José de Jesus Orozco Hernández, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992  
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

UA 24/24\_Colombia

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