

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631
Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos
 President of the Republic of Colombia

via fax: 011 57 1 261 6287
Estimado Sr. Andrés Villamizar Pachón
 Director of the National Protection Unit of Colombia

April 16, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned about the recent threat against **Javier Barrera Santa**, a coordinator the Medellín branch of the Association for Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared (ASFADDES). ASFADDES is an organization that campaigns for justice in cases of enforced disappearances.

On March 12, Javier Barrera Santa received a phone call where he was told, "Snitch son-of-a-bitch, you are the one who is going to disappear." Javier Barrera Santa is a spokesperson for the Departmental Round Table on Enforced Disappearances, a coalition of victims and human rights organizations that has been organizing public events to commemorate those forcibly disappeared and informing the public about ongoing impunity. He has made public statements in favor of the decision of the Supreme Court of Justice (October 2013) to investigate retired army general Mauricio Santoyo for his role in the case of the enforced disappearances of Angel Quintero and Claudia Monsalve in 2000. Javier Barrera Santa has said that other members of the security forces may also have been involved.

ASFADDES has previously been under surveillance for their justice work. For example, on March 1 a man was found hiding behind a door during a meeting of relatives of victims of enforced disappearances at the Medellín office of ASFADDES. When challenged by those present, he ran off. Javier Barrera Santa has previously been threatened for his human rights work, and was forced to leave his home after threats to his life in 2011.

We have written two previous letters in the past two years about threats to other leaders of ASFADDES.

Because of our concern for the safety of Javier Barrera Santa and other members of ASFADDES, we **strongly urge** that you

- provide them with effective protection, in line with their wishes;
- order full and impartial investigations into the threats, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- fulfill your obligations to protect human rights defenders, as laid out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator

copies: ASFADDES-Medellín ~ via US mail
 Luis Carlos Villegas, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email
 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 fax

UA62_14_Colombia

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