

URGENT ACTION

PARAMILITARIES INTIMIDATE WITH DEATH THREATS

In two separate instances on 16 and 17 July, paramilitaries delivered warnings and death threats to human rights defenders. A threat was made at the home of Rocio Campos a day after paramilitaries left a death threat at the home of Elizardo Badillo against him and other members of the human rights movement of Barrancabermeja, northern Colombia.

On 17 July, two men on a motorcycle without a licence plate arrived at the home of **Rocio Campos** in the city of Barrancabermeja, in the northern region of Magdalena Medio. She is a member of the Magdalena Medio branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (*Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado*, MOVICE). She was not at home and they, one of them possibly armed, told her daughter "tell her that those who have forbidden her to do human rights work are looking for her" (*dile que la estábamos buscando los mismos que la prohibieron hacer el trabajo de derechos humanos*). She has been fighting for truth and justice, especially in the case of the paramilitary massacre of 16 May 1998, in which also 25 people, including her brother, were forcibly disappeared. The remains of some of those disappeared were given to their families in a ceremony on 5 and 6 July. At the event Rocio Campos spoke to local media demanding justice.

On 16 July a death threat was left at the home of the community leader **Elizardo Badillo**. The threat used the same paramilitary logo as featured on a previous threat against Juan Carlos Galvis, LGBTI activists and others on 11 July (see UA 178/13 AMR 23/030/2013). The 16 July death threat named several human rights organizations and individuals including the coalition Space of Human Rights Workers in Barrancabermeja (*Espacio de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos*, ETTDH) of which MOVICE Magdalena Medio is a member organization. It gave an ultimatum until 4 August to leave the city and warned "Do not waste your time reporting and playing police, because this sentence is definitive and of death." (*No gasten tiempo en denuncias y a jugar la policía, porque esta sentencia es definitiva y de muerte.*). Members of social and human rights movements in Barrancabermeja had been discussing the possibility of a public meeting on 3 August.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- ✓ Expressing concern for Rocio Campos and other members of MOVICE, as well as Elizardo Badillo and others named in the death threat (see names overleaf), and calling on the authorities to provide them with effective protection, in line with their wishes;
- ✓ Demanding that the authorities order full and impartial investigations into the threats, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- ✓ Urging the authorities to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 04 SEPTEMBER 2013 TO:

President

Presidente Juan Manuel Santos
 Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 596 0631

**Salutation: Dear President Santos/
 Excmo Sr. Presidente Santos**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

María Ángela Holguín
 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
 Palacio San Carlos
 Calle 10 No. 5-51
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: +57 1 381 4742 (keep trying)

Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimada

Ministra

And copies to:

MOVICE Magdalena Medio
 Carrera 18 No 48-18
 Barrio Colombia
 Barrancabermeja
 Colombia

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

During Colombia's long-running armed conflict that has pitted the security forces, acting alone or in collusion with paramilitaries, against a range of guerrilla groups, civilians have been the main victims. Members of trade unions, human rights organizations and other social organizations have often been labelled as guerrilla collaborators or supporters by the security forces and paramilitaries. As a result they are often killed, threatened or subjected to enforced disappearance. Guerrilla groups have also threatened or killed human rights defenders they consider to be siding with the enemy.

Colombia's paramilitary groups supposedly demobilized in a government-sponsored process that began in 2003, but it is clear from the threats against human rights organizations and trade unions, in the Magdalena Medio area and elsewhere, that they are still operating. Colombian human rights organizations have expressed concerns that paramilitaries who are detained in prison continue to organize crimes from inside prison.

Guerrilla forces have also been responsible for numerous killings and threats in Colombia in recent years.

MOVICE is a broad coalition of civil society organizations campaigning for truth, justice and reparation for the victims of Colombia's long-running internal armed conflict. Its members have documented and exposed many cases of killings and enforced disappearance carried out by the security forces and paramilitary groups.

ETTDH is a coalition of different sectors of civil society including human rights organizations, trade unions and LGBTI activists in Barrancabermeja.

On 16 May 1998 a large heavily armed paramilitary force drove unhindered through a number of poorer districts of the city of Barrancabermeja. On route the gunmen rounded up residents, killing several on the spot and forcing many others on to trucks. Paramilitaries forcibly abducted 25 people.

The death threat read "credhos, asorvim, asodesamuba, quinto mandamiento, people in action, ettdh lead by Mrs. Ana, the Juanas, William Mendoza are the worst troublemakers, they were already warned. Elizardo Badillo, Ana Briseida, Edwin Cadona, leader of the Camilo Torres school, Mr. Nieto you have until 04 August to leave the city" (credhos, asorvim, asodesamuba, quinto mandamiento, gente en acción, ettdh, dirigida por la señora Ana, las juanas, William Mendoza son los más revoltoso [sic] ya se les había al vertido [sic]. Elizardo Badillo, Ana Briseida, Edwin Cadona, líder del Colegio Camilo Torres, el señor Nieto tienen hasta el 04 de agosto para abandonar la ciudad.).

Name: Rocio Campos (f), Elizardo Badillo (m), Ana Teresa Rueda (f), William Mendoza (m), Ana Briseida (f), Edwin Cardona (m), Oviedo Nieto (m) as well as members of ETTDH including MOVICE Magdalena Medio, CREDHOS, ASORVIM, ASODESAMUBA, Quinto Mandamiento and People in Action.

Gender m/f: both