

# URGENT ACTION

## TRADE UNION LEADER SHOT AT IN COLOMBIA

**Gunmen fired shots at a taxi in which trade union leader Rubén Morrón Guerrero was travelling on the eve of a trade union negotiation in Barranquilla, Northern Colombia.**

On 28 May, trade union leader **Rubén Morrón Guerrero** escaped unharmed when two gunmen on a motorbike opened fire on the taxi in which he was travelling in, the city of Barranquilla, department of Atlántico. The bullets hit the back of the car where Rubén Morrón Guerrero was sitting. Rubén Morrón Guerrero is the secretary general of the Chiriguaná Municipality Branch of the Colombian Union of Workers of the Mining, Petrochemical, Agro-Fuels and Energy Industries (Sindicato Nacional de la Industria Minera, Petroquímica, Agrocombustible y Energética, SINTRAMIENERGETICA) in the department of Cesar. He is part of a union delegation negotiating a new labour agreement with the mining company Drummond Ltd.

The attack comes in the wake of several recent death threats against members and leaders of SINTRAMIENERGETICA. On 1 April Rubén Morrón Guerrero was named in a death threat made against several trade union leaders by the paramilitary group "Rastrojo Urban Commands" (Los Rastrojos - Comandos Urbanos). Because of the attack, Rubén Morrón Guerrero did not participate in a negotiation meeting scheduled on 29 May. He and his family have left Barranquilla fearing for their lives. In the past, members of SINTRAMIENERGETICA have been killed and threatened in the context of such negotiations with companies.

**Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities to conduct a full and impartial investigation into the attack and previous threats, and to make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- Expressing concern for the safety of Rubén Morrón Guerrero, his family and other members of SINTRAMIENERGETICA;
- Demanding that the authorities provide protection for Rubén Morrón Guerrero in accordance with his wishes;
- Urging them to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links with the security forces, in line with repeated UN recommendations.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 JULY 2013 TO:**

President

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

**Salutation: Dear President**

**Santos/Excmo. Sr. Presidente Santos**

Labour Minister

Rafael Pardo Rueda  
 Ministerio de Trabajo  
 Carrera 14, No.99-33  
 Bogotá, Colombia  
 Fax: +57 1 489 3900 ext. 2320

**Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimado**

**Ministro**

**And copies to:**

SINTRAMIENERGETICA  
 Calle 34 No. 44 - 63  
 Piso 9  
 Oficina 9A  
 Barranquilla  
 Colombia

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 66/13. Further information:  
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/016/2013/en>

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 INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

During Colombia's long-running armed conflict between left-wing guerrillas and the armed forces, which at times operate in collusion with paramilitaries, members of human rights organizations, trade unions and other social organizations have often been threatened, subjected to enforced disappearance or killed. 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 that they are still operating.

Colombia has one of the highest rates of trade unionist killings in the world. Trade unionists face repeated death threats or are killed during labour disputes and during campaigns for improvement of their pay and working conditions. They have been repeatedly threatened and many have been killed or subjected to enforced disappearance by paramilitaries either acting alone or in collusion with the security forces. In addition, the security forces and paramilitaries often accuse trade unionists of being guerrilla sympathizers or auxiliaries. Guerrilla forces have also been responsible for killing and threatening those they accuse of collaborating with their enemies.

For many years members of SINTRAMIENERGETICA have been killed and have received death threats by paramilitaries while the union has been seeking the improvement of working conditions. Over recent months members of SINTRAMIENERGETICA have been the target of paramilitary death threats in the context of labour disputes.

Name: Rubén Morrón Guerrero

Gender m/f: male

Further information on UA: 66/13 Index: AMR 23/026/2013 Issue Date: 10 June 2013