

URGENT ACTION

DEATH THREAT AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Colombian human rights defenders Diego Martínez and Jeison Paba have received an email threatening to kill them and their families, while they were participating in an event in the municipality La Macarena, central Colombia.

Diego Martínez and Jeison Paba received an unsigned email on 6 July that read: “we have decided to declare you military objectives, to put an end to your criminal and terrorist activity, you who disguised as human rights defenders are no more than [guerrillas]” (*hemos decidido declararlos objetivos militares, para acabar con su actividad criminal y terrorista ustedes que disfrazados como defensores de derechos humanos, no son mas que miembros de las [guerrillas]*). The death threat also said the warning was not only for them, but also for their families, warning them they were not safe.

Diego Martínez is the executive secretary of the Permanent Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (*Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos*, CPDH), where Jeison Paba is a lawyer. They had been participating in the International Youth for Peace Event (*Evento Internacional de Jóvenes por la Paz*) in the municipality of La Macarena, Meta Department, when they received the death threat. During the event, in a highly militarized area, CPDH and other human rights NGOs 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.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to recognize publicly that Diego Martínez and Jeison Paba are human rights defenders, who carry out legitimate, vital and relevant work, and condemn the death threats they and their families received on 6 July;
- Urging the authorities to ensure their safety, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Urging them to order full and impartial investigations into the death threats received by both these CPDH members and their families, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding them to fulfill their obligations regarding the protection of human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 AUGUST 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**

Attorney General

Eduardo Montealegre
 Fiscalía General de la Nación
 Diagonal 22B No. 52-01 (Ciudad Salitre)
 Bloque C Piso 4
 Bogotá, Colombia

Fax +57 1 570 2000 (when recorded
 voice answers, dial ext 2023)

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/
 Estimado Sr. Fiscal General**

And copies to:

NGO
 CPDH
 Carrera 6 No 12 - 21
 Bogotá
 Colombia

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

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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, members of human rights organizations, trade unions 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.

The human rights NGO CPDH was founded in 1979 following the first national forum for human rights. Their main office is in the capital, Bogotá, but they also have 15 other offices in different parts of Colombia. According to CPDH 54 leading figures of the organization have been killed. CPDH considers these killings are part of an attempt to silence them and stop them from condemning institutional abuses against the civilian population in the context of the armed conflict. Members of CPDH are still being threatened, harassed or intimidated.

Jeison Paba has been working as a lawyer for the peasant farmers of the La Europa farm, Sucre Department. In March 2013 the peasant farmers filed a request for land restitution. Jeison Paba has received five death threats from paramilitaries since June 2012, including some from the "Anti-Restitution Army". On 16 January 2013 in an anonymous phone call, a man told the CPDH offices they wanted Jeison Paba's "head". Over the last two years, Amnesty International has received many reports of people, and human rights defenders working with them, being threatened or killed while campaigning for the restitution of lands they lost as a result of human rights violations and abuses. Diego Martínez of CPDH has also been subject to threats previously. People were seen monitoring the International Youth for Peace Event. The organizers reported this to the authorities, but no action has apparently been taken to identify who these people were or why they were monitoring the event.

Non-governmental human rights organizations and peasant farmer community representatives have condemned extrajudicial executions committed by the security forces in La Macarena Municipality, Meta Department. Numerous victims of extrajudicial executions carried out in recent years are thought to be buried in the cemetery of the municipality. The military justice system has guaranteed the impunity of security forces perpetrators over many years.

In June 2013 the Colombian Congress approved an enabling law to a Constitutional reform passed in December 2012. The reform strengthens military justice. It is feared that the law will increase impunity for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by Colombia's security forces. (For more information see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/colombia-congress-should-reject-law-reforming-militaryjustice-system-2013-06-12>).

Name: Diego Martínez (m), Jeison Paba (m) and their families
Gender m/f: both

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