

URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS DEFENDERS RECEIVE DEATH THREAT

Defender of Indigenous Peoples' rights Juan Pablo Gutiérrez received a death threat from a paramilitary group targeting him and other Indigenous organizations in Colombia. He has received numerous threatening phone calls since. His life and that of his colleagues is at risk.

On 14 August **Juan Pablo Gutiérrez** was near his home in the Colina Campestre neighbourhood in Bogotá, the Colombian capital, when an unknown individual gave him an envelope with no return address. The envelope contained a death threat targeting Juan Pablo Gutiérrez and other members of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia, **ONIC**) as well as members of the Cauca Indigenous Regional Council (Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca, **CRIC**). Juan Pablo Gutiérrez is a Colombian-French photographer and defender of Indigenous Peoples' rights. He is an international representative of ONIC and has collaborated with Amnesty International on several photographic projects.

Both ONIC and CRIC have a longstanding history in the protection and promotion of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Colombia. The threat, which was signed by the paramilitary group Black Eagles, Capital Bloc (Aguilas Negras, Bloque Capital), accused Juan Pablo Gutiérrez of being close to the guerrilla group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC) and declared him a military target. It then stated: "[w]e remind the snitch son of a bitch Juan Pablo Gutiérrez and his ONIC and CRIC comrades manipulating the country's indigenous peoples that Colombia must be respected! Those who dishonour the brave national state must be eliminated. It does not matter if the bastard son of a bitch is protected. In Colombia or elsewhere he has little time left." In the days following this death threat Juan Pablo Gutiérrez has also received numerous threatening phone calls.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Juan Pablo Gutiérrez and other members of ONIC and CRIC;
- Urging the authorities to immediately provide effective protection for them in accordance with their wishes and reminding them to fulfil their obligation to protect human rights defenders, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;
- Calling on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the death threat and harassment against Juan Pablo Gutiérrez and members of ONIC and CRIC, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 OCTOBER 2014 TO:

Director of the Protection Unit

Andrés Villamizar
Unidad Nacional de
Protección del Ministerio del Interior
Carrera 58 No. 10-51
Bogotá, Colombia
Fax: +57 1 261 6287 (keep trying)

Salutation: Dear Mr Villamizar /

Estimado Señor Villamizar

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 Señor Fiscal General

And copies to:

National Indigenous Organization of
Colombia (ONIC)
Calle 12b No. 4 – 38
Bogotá, Colombia
Fax: +57 1 284 3465
Email: derechoshumanos@onic.org.co

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**



URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS DEFENDERS RECEIVE DEATH THREAT

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Juan Pablo Gutiérrez's life has previously been at risk as a result of his human rights work. In 2011 while living in France and acting as international representative of ONIC, he started receiving threats, some saying that he should not return to Colombia. On 9 October 2013 he was driving his van in Bogotá when four individuals on two motorcycles intercepted his van. When Juan Pablo Gutiérrez accelerated to escape, the men fired at him several times but only hit his vehicle. Despite the fact that ONIC requested the state's National Protection Unit (Unidad Nacional de Protección, UNP) grant urgent protection measures to Juan Pablo Gutiérrez following this attempt on his life, no measures have been implemented to date.

Indigenous, Afro-descendent and peasant farmer communities and human rights defenders still bear the brunt of the long-running armed conflict in Colombia. All the warring parties – the security forces, either alone or in collusion with paramilitary groups, and the guerrilla – are responsible for abuses and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including killings of protected persons, enforced disappearances or abductions, torture, forced displacement and crimes of sexual violence. Despite the ongoing peace talks between the Colombian government and the FARC, human rights abuses and violations, committed principally against civilians, including Indigenous People, continue unabated.

More than five million people have been forcibly displaced since 1985. According to the latest figures available from the NGO Codhes, almost 220,000 civilians were forced to flee their homes in 2013. Indigenous communities continue to be hard hit. According to the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC), at least 37 indigenous leaders were killed between January 2013 and June 2014.

Name: Juan Pablo Gutiérrez
Gender m/f: m

UA: 210/14 Index: AMR 23/029/2014 Issue Date: 21 August 2014