

URGENT ACTION



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Note: Please write on behalf of these persons even though you may not have received the original UA when issued on November 9, 2009. Thanks!

20 April 2011

Further information on UA 301/09 (9 November 2009) and follow ups (16 February 2010; 26 May 2010; 3 December 2010; 31 March 2011) - [Fear for safety](#)

COLOMBIA **Ingrid Vergara (f), human rights defender**
Cendy Torres Vergara (f),

On 13 April Cendy Torres Vergara, daughter of human rights defender Ingrid Vergara, received new death threats by telephone. Her mother is one of the leaders of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes, MOVICE, in Sucre Department, Northern Colombia.

On 13 April **Cendy Torres Vergara** received a phone call during which she was threatened with death. The caller said “You have 78 hours to leave. Shut up and make your ... bitch of a mother shut up because we are going to finish you all off”. (*Tienen 78 horas para salir. Cállate y obliga a la ... hijueputa de tu mamá que se calle porque vamos a acabar con todos*). According to Cendy Torres Vergara, the voice of the caller was the same as that of a previous caller who also threatened her with death on 30 March. On 13 April Indira Torres Vergara, another of Ingrid Vergara's daughters, was followed by two unidentified men as she left the University of Sucre in Sincelejo.

On 15 April another death threat was posted on Cendy Torres Vergara's Facebook page, which read: “Avenging Counteraguerrillas: this will be a red Easter week, if your bitch of a mother likes red, your time is up” (*Justiciero Contraguerrilleros: esta sera una semana santa roja si le gusta el rojo a la hijueputa de tu mama se te acaba el tiempo*).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cendy Torres has received several death threats in recent years, supposedly in reprisal for her mother's work as a human rights defender. Ingrid Vergara, of the Sucre branch of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (*Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, MOVICE*), has been campaigning against impunity in cases of human rights violations committed by paramilitary groups, who have often operated with the support of the armed forces and local politicians, and on the issue of return of lands stolen during the course of paramilitary operations.

On 30 March 2011 a caller told Cendy Torres Vergara that she would end up dead on the road.

On 1 December 2010, armed men entered Ingrid Vergara's home, physically and verbally attacked Cendy Torres Vergara, and threatened to kill her. The men left the home after forcefully removing the hard drive of a computer containing work Ingrid Vergara had been carrying out related to land issues, specifically documentation for a public meeting scheduled for two days later.

On 20 November 2010, Ingrid Vergara received a call on her mobile phone. The caller told her “don't get into land issues” and then hung up after a silence.

On 12 October 2010, when Ingrid Vergara was in Majagual Square, in Sincelejo, one of the bodyguards, provided to her by the Ministry of Interior's protection programme, noticed three suspicious men near Ingrid Vergara, talking about the absence of

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her second bodyguard. When two more men approached Ingrid Vergara on a motorcycle, the bodyguard urged her to quickly leave the square. She thinks that they may have been planning to kill her.

On 2 April 2008, unknown men threatened to kill Cendy Torres Vergara, supposedly in reprisal for her mother's work as a human rights defender. On 26 October 2009, Cendy Torres Vergara received a death threat addressed to Ingrid Vergara.

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. Ingrid Vergara and her colleagues in MOVICE have documented and exposed many cases of killings and enforced disappearance carried out by the security forces and paramilitary groups in Sucre department.

On 23 March 2011 Eder Verbel Rocha, a member of MOVICE in Sucre Department killed. (see UA 94/11 AMR 23/007/2011 Colombia).

On 18 May 2010 Rogelio Martínez, one of the leaders of MOVICE in Sucre Department was shot dead. He had been campaigning for the right to truth, justice and reparation for communities forcibly displaced communities during the course of attacks carried out by army-backed paramilitaries in previous years.

Further information: www.amnesty.org/http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/008/2011/en,
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/027/2009/en>,
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/007/2010/en>,
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR23/019/2010/en>,
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/036/2010/en>,
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR23/007/2011/en>.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- Express concern for the safety of Cendy Torres Vergara, Indira Torres Vergara, Ingrid Vergara and their family and urge the authorities to guarantee their safety in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Call on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into all threats including previous death threats against Ingrid Vergara, her daughter Cendy Torres Vergara and her colleagues, to publish the results and to bring those responsible to justice;
- Urge the authorities to fulfil their obligations regarding the situation of human rights defenders, as laid out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

APPEALS TO:

President

Señor Juan Manuel Santos
Presidente Juan Manuel Santos
Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8
No.7-26, Bogotá,
COLOMBIA

Fax: 011 57 1 596 0631

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

Minister of Interior and Justice

Señor Germán Vargas Lleras
Ministerio Del Interior y De Justicia
Carrera 9a. No. 14-10, Bogotá
COLOMBIA

Fax: 011 57 1 599 8961

**Salutation: Dear Minister Vargas /Estimado Sr.
Ministro Vargas**

COPIES:

MOVICE

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PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.

Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 1 June 2011