

URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE THREATENED AND KILLED

Four Indigenous men have been killed and several enforced disappearances and death threats have been reported in northern Cauca Department, south-western Colombia.

On 6 February sugarcane workers **Gerardo Velasco Escue** and **Emiliano Silva Oteca** of the Toéz Indigenous Resguardo (Reservation) finished their workday in Caloto municipality, Cauca Department, and left to travel back to their community. They never reached home. A witness saw five unidentified armed men stop them, around 200 meters from an army checkpoint near the hamlet of La Selva, Caloto municipality, and leave with them. On 8 February the community found their bodies with signs of torture in the neighboring municipality of Guanache, Cauca Department. On 5 February a death threat by the Black Eagles (Aguilas Negras) paramilitary group announcing that it was "time for social cleansing in northern Cauca" had been circulated in the municipalities of Caloto, Guachene and Santander de Quilichao. **Alfredo Campo Lectamo**, the governor of the Toéz Resguardo, and other Indigenous leaders, have received further threats after speaking out against the killings.

On 13 February the bodies of **Arturo Andrés Galindo Bastos** and **Carlos Albeiro Mera Pino**, both Nasa Indigenous Peoples, were found in the Cerro Tijeras Resguardo, Suarez municipality, Cauca Department. Arturo Andrés Galindo Bastos' whereabouts had been unknown since 30 January. Next to their bodies there was a sign which read "For [being] snitches" (*Por [ser] sapos*).

Since 14 December 2014 Indigenous Peoples in northern Cauca have been occupying land to demand full reparation, including access to land, as redress for several mass killings, including the El Nilo massacre in 1991.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Alfredo Campo Lectamo, and other Indigenous leaders in northern Cauca Department, and urging the authorities to guarantee their safety in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Calling on the authorities to order a full and impartial investigation into the enforced disappearance and killings of Gerardo Velasco Escue and Emiliano Silva Oteca, as well as the killings of Arturo Andrés Galindo Bastos and Carlos Albeiro Mera Pino and the death threats against Indigenous Peoples in northern Cauca Department, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to take immediate action to dismantle paramilitary groups and break their links with the security forces, in line with stated government commitments and UN recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 APRIL 2015 TO:

President

Juan Manuel Santos
 Presidente de la República
 Casa de Nariño
 Calle 7. No 6-54.
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Fax: 011 57 1 596 0631
 Salutation: Dear President Santos/
 Excmo Sr Presidente Santos

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

Aurelio Iragorri Valencia
 Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural
 Avenida Jiménez No 7-1765, Piso 3
 Email:
 despachoministro@minagricultura.gov.co
 Bogotá, Colombia
 Salutation: Dear Minister/ Estimado Sr.
 Ministro

And copies to:

NGO
 ACIN
 Carrera 7 No 6-22
 Barrio Los Samanes
 Piso 3, Oficina Tejido Defensa de la Vida
 Santander de Quilichao
 Cauca, Colombia

Also send copies to:

Ambassador Luis Carlos Villegas, Embassy of Colombia
 2118 Leroy Place, NW, Washington DC 20008
 Tel: 202 387 8338 | Email: embassyofcolombia@colombiaemb.org

Please let us know if you took action so that we can track our impact! EITHER send a short email to uan@aiusa.org with "UA 43/15 " in the subject line, and include in the body of the email the number of letters and/or emails you sent, OR fill out this [short online form](#) (press Ctrl + click on link) to let us know how you took action. Thank you for taking action! Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date.

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Over the past 50 years, Colombia's internal armed conflict has pitted the security forces and paramilitaries against a range of guerrilla groups. In spite of the ongoing peace process all the warring parties continue to be responsible for serious crimes under international law and other human rights violations. Indigenous communities are among those most affected by the armed conflict. According to the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia, ONIC), 10 Indigenous people were killed for conflict-related reasons and at least 2,819 forcibly displaced in the first nine months of 2014. According to the Association of Indigenous Cabildos of Northern Cauca (Asociación Cabildeo Indígenas del Norte de Cauca, ACIN) more than 600 Indigenous people have been killed in Northern Cauca since 1999.

On 16 December 1991, 20 Nasa people of the Huellas Indigenous Resguardo, including children, were killed in a joint paramilitary-police operation on the El Nilo farm in Caloto Municipality. The El Nilo massacre was submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in December 1992. Following an agreement between the Colombian government and the IACHR a committee was created to investigate the massacre, which recommended in 1996 that the Colombian government must ensure that those responsible would be brought to justice and that the families of the victims would receive reparation. In August 2014 the Supreme Court of Justice in Colombia ordered that the investigation of a general and a major linked to the massacre, which had been archived by a military court in July 1999, should be reopened. In early February 2015 the general and the major handed themselves over to the police authorities. The Huellas Cabildo (Indigenous Council, which is the maximum political authority within their territories) issued a public statement on 5 February demanding justice and comprehensive reparation.

The Toéz live in the municipality of Caloto where they relocated when a mudslide in their territory forced them to leave the Paéz River valley in Paéz Municipality in 1994. Their Cabildo is part of ACIN.

Name: Alfredo Campo Lectamo (m), Gerardo Velasco Escue (m), Emiliano Silva Oteca (m), Arturo Andrés Galindo Bastos (m), Carlos Albeiro Mera Pino (m) and other indigenous leaders and people in northern Cauca Department
Issues: Extrajudicial killings, Death threats, Enforced disappearance

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