

URGENT ACTION

THREATS AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS

Alleged land traffickers harass and threaten members of the Save Chaparrí Defense Front of the Chaparrí Ecological Reserve in Peru. The members of the Front fear for their safety.

In January and February 2018, members of the Save Chaparrí Defense Front (**Frente de Defensa Salvemos Chaparrí**) reported to Amnesty International being harassed through threats of being attacked or deprived of their land, and monitored by alleged land traffickers in the Santa Catalina de Chongoyape community, inside the Chaparrí Ecological Reserve. The Defense Front is made up of community members of Santa Catalina de Chongoyape community and of the Association for the Conservation of Nature and Sustainable Tourism (Asociación para la Conservación de la Naturaleza y Turismo Sostenible Chaparrí, ACOTURCH). They dedicate themselves to the defense and conservation of the reserve.

The community members, part of the Defense Front, have made public that over the last three years, they have been victims of harassment, verbal and physical violence, and monitoring, arbitrary separation from the community and death threats from third parties foreign to their community. On 30 December 2017 the situation worsened when four unidentified individuals murdered Lieutenant Governor José Napoleón Tarrillo Astonitas in his house by beating and strangling him in the presence of his wife, Flor Vallejos. José Tarrillo opposed the entry of people foreign to the community and for that he had already received death threats. The criminal investigation into the murder has not produced any results so far and Flor Vallejos had to flee her community in January as the threats against her persisted for being the only eyewitness to the crime. After the murder of José Tarrillo the threats and harassment against the members of the Defense Front have increased. According to public information, the Ministry of Interior requested the regional administrative authority (*prefecto*) to issue protection measures for a number of people, among them members of the Defense Front. Nonetheless, to date these people do not know what type of measures were required because they indicate that they have not been implemented.

Members of the Defense Front told Amnesty International that since 2015 third parties foreign to the Santa Catalina de Chongoyape community have bought and sold lands with the purpose of negotiating them with companies that would use them for purposes other than the conservation of the area.

1) TAKE ACTION

Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:

- Calling on the Minister of Interior to issue protection measures to safeguard the integrity of the Defense Front and the Santa Catalina de Chongoyape community members in consultation and agreement with them;
- Urging the Minister of Interior to publicly recognize the legitimate work of the Defense Front, the Santa Catalina de Chongoyape community members, and the work of all people who defend rights related to land, territory and the environment; to ensure that human rights defenders enjoy a safe and enabling environment;
- Calling on the Attorney General to promptly and thoroughly investigate the murder of José Napoleón Tarrillo Astonitas, and the acts of harassment against the Defense Front and the Santa Catalina de Chongoyape community members as well as the facts related to the land sale in the reserve, make the results public and bring the material and intellectual perpetrators to justice;
- Calling on the Minister of Justice to adopt with urgency a mechanism of protection of human rights defenders.

Contact these two officials by 17 April, 2018:

Minister of Interior
Vicente Romero Fernández
Ministro del Interior
Plaza 30 de Agosto s/n Urb. Corpac - San Isidro, Lima, Perú
Email: vromero@mininter.gob.pe
Twitter: [@MininterPeru](https://twitter.com/MininterPeru)
Salutation: Dear Minister

Ambassador Carlos Pareja, Embassy of Peru
1700 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC 20036
Phone: 202 833 9860 | Fax: 202 659 8124
Contact Form: <https://www.embassyofperu.org/contact/>
Email: webadmin@embassyofperu.us
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

[Click here](#) to let us know if you took action on this case! *This is Urgent Action 51.18*

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The harassment in this area goes beyond members of the community. On 27 January Duberlí Rodríguez, President of the Judiciary, publicly reported a death threat received through his brother after a visit he made to Chaparrí to analyze the situation of land sale within the reserve. The Environmental Specialized Prosecutor's Office is in charge of the investigation and the Prosecutors have stated that they fear for their security while conducting the investigations.

The Chaparrí Ecological Reserve is a Private Conservation Area recognized by the State in 2001 located in the province of Chiclayo, department of Lambayeque. Of the 34,412 hectares of the territory of the reserve, more than 80% belongs to the community of Santa Catalina de Chongoyape. On 1 March 2018 the civil society organization National Coordinator of Human Rights (Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos) sent a communication to the Ministry of Interior requesting protection for the defenders of Chaparrí; nevertheless they have not yet received a response.

Name: Members of the Chaparrí Defense Front
Gender: all

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