

URGENT ACTION

ATTACKS AGAINST WOMEN SEARCHERS MUST BE INVESTIGATED

On June 8, Cleiner Almanza was coerced into meeting with unknown individuals in an isolated area of Cartagena, where she was attacked, tortured, subjected to gender-based violence, and nearly killed. Cleiner is a woman searching for her brother, who was forcibly disappeared in 1998 in the Montes de María region, in northern Colombia. She is also a recognized human rights defender, particularly of women's rights, and has previously been attacked and her human rights violated because of her work. We call on the Attorney General's Office to fulfil its commitment to women searchers by conducting a prompt, thorough, and effective investigation into the crimes committed against Cleiner Almanza.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 63.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Luz Adriana Camargo

Attorney General

Attorney General's Office Avenida Calle 24 No. 52 – 01

Bogotá D.C.

Email: direccion.derechoshumanos@fiscalia.gov.co

X: @FiscaliaCol

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Colombian Embassy in the United States

Ambassador Daniel García-Peña Jaramillo

1724 Massachusetts Ave, NW,

Washington, DC 20036

Email: eestadosunidos@cancilleria.gov.co

Dear Attorney General,

I am deeply concerned about the situation of women searchers of victims of enforced disappearance in Colombia. Thousands of victims of enforced disappearance have loved ones searching for their whereabouts, for the truth about the crimes they suffered, and for justice. Most searchers are women and this exposes them to a disproportionate risk of suffering gender-based violence.

I am especially worried about **Cleiner Almanza**, a woman searcher from the Montes de María region, who was subjected to intimidation, torture, gender-based violence, and an attempted murder in Cartagena on June 8. This is the second serious attack against a woman searcher in Colombia in less than a month, following the killing of **Claribel Moreno Castillo** in Jamundí, Valle del Cauca, on May 13.

In response to this situation, women searchers themselves successfully advocated for the adoption of Law 2364 of 2024, which recognizes them as human rights defenders and provides for their protection. Following the enactment of this law, the Attorney General's Office publicly committed to diligently investigate the attacks against them.

I urge you to honor the Attorney General's Office's commitment to women searchers in Colombia by thoroughly investigating the attacks against Cleiner Almanza, identifying those responsible for ordering and carrying out these crimes, and bringing them to justice in fair trials. Effective investigations are essential to prevent further attacks against women searchers in Colombia.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Enforced disappearances are widespread in the Americas. It is a problem that has troubled the region for decades, since at least the 1960s and 1970s. While enforced disappearances are committed for different reasons, it is states' duty to search for the victims. In Colombia, enforced disappearance is one of many forms of violence affecting the country because of decades of armed conflict and socio-political violence. The Truth Commission, in its final report in 2022, stated that an estimated amount of 210,000 people were victims of this grave human rights violation between 1985 and 2016. Between December 2016 and July 2024, the International Committee of the Red Cross documented a further 1,730 cases of disappearance linked to the armed conflict and violence: one every 36 hours.

Women have played a leading role in the search for victims of enforced disappearance and in the creation and leadership of organizations of relatives of victims of enforced disappearance across the Americas and in Colombia. Amnesty International's campaign [#SearchingWithoutFear](#) highlights that mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters suffer the worst impacts of enforced disappearance while speaking out against it. Amnesty International's report [Searching Without Fear: International Standards for Protecting Women Searchers in the Americas](#) highlights the obligation of the state to search for the victims of enforced disappearance, to allow the loved-ones, particularly women searchers, to participate of the search, and to protect the rights and safety of women searchers.

In Colombia, Amnesty International's report [Transforming pain into rights: Risks, threats and attack on women searchers in Colombia](#) documents the reality experienced by the women who dedicate their lives to searching for the victims of enforced disappearance. Women searchers suffer stigmatization; physical violence frequently associated with gender-based violence, harassment and threats, which in some cases forces them to flee the country and live in exile; impoverishment due to having to dedicate their lives to searching, which involves costs and difficulties for employment, as well as having to sustain their families; and impunity, one of the most serious of these affectations. Most of the legal procedures for enforced disappearance in the country, and the violence suffered by women searchers, continue to wait for justice after many years.

Colombian women searchers themselves advocated for a law recognizing their work and protecting them, [Law 2364 of 2024](#). However, almost two years after the expedition of the law, [many commitments remain unfulfilled](#). Colombia's Attorney General's office, however, [announced its commitment](#) with the women searchers a shortly after the law being enacted. Between May and June 2026, two women searchers were seriously attacked in Colombia. In May 13, [Claribel Moreno Castillo](#) was murdered after dedicating four years of her life to the search of her daughter, **Natalia Buitrago**. Then, on June 8, [Cleiner Almanza](#) was coerced into meeting unknown individuals in an isolated area of Cartagena, where she was attacked, tortured, subjected to gender-based violence, and nearly killed. Cleiner is a women searching for her brother, who was forcibly disappeared in 1998. She is also a renowned human rights and women rights defender and has previously been attacked and her human rights violated because of her work.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: September 10, 2026

NAME: Cleiner Almanza