

URGENT ACTION

INVESTIGATE THREATS AGAINST CREDHOS

On June 1, a leaflet supposedly signed by the armed group Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada (ACSN) was publicly distributed, threatening the lives of several people in Puerto Wilches, a municipality in the Santander department, in Colombia's Magdalena Medio region. Those threatened included several members of the human rights non-government organization, The Regional Corporation for the Defense of Human Rights or CREDHOS. The Attorney General must carry out prompt, thorough, and effective investigations into those responsible for these threats, bring them to justice, and prevent further attacks against people defending human rights in Magdalena Medio.

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 60.26**. 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

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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 concerned about the risks to the lives, safety, and security of human rights defenders, particularly **members of the civil society organization, Corporación Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CREDHOS)**, in the municipality of Puerto Wilches, Santander department, in Colombia's Magdalena Medio region.

On June 1, a leaflet supposedly signed by the armed group Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada (ACSN) was publicly distributed, declaring several people in Puerto Wilches to be "military objectives" of the group and ordering them to leave the municipality within 48 hours. Those threatened included members of CREDHOS's municipal human rights committee.

Furthermore, this threat is one in a series of threats and attacks committed in recent months by armed groups in the Magdalena Medio region, including the Ejército Gaitanista de Colombia (EGC). These attacks have targeted members of CREDHOS and directly affected their work defending the human rights of communities across the municipalities of Santander, Bolívar, and Antioquia.

I urge you to exercise the utmost diligence in effectively fulfilling the Attorney General's Office's duty to investigate the threats and attacks against members of CREDHOS, establish who is responsible for ordering and carrying out these acts, and bring those responsible to justice in fair trials.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Magdalena Medio is an extensive valley between the Colombian mountain ranges crossed by Colombia's main river, the Magdalena River. Oil is one of the major sources of economic activity in the region, where the country's largest refinery operates in the city of Barrancabermeja, Santander, at the heart of the Magdalena Medio. Due to its location and the abundance of valuable resources, the region is considered strategic and has been the subject of continuous disputes between the state and armed groups present in the country. The Magdalena Medio has also been a stage for sustained processes of popular mobilization and human rights advocacy for decades. The combination of unions, feminist, popular movements, and human rights defense has created particularly strong scenarios of assertion and resistance. This, coupled with the dispute for territorial, political, and economic control of the region by interest groups and armed factions, has fostered a breeding ground for violence against human rights defenders that has persisted since at least the 1980s.

All of this unfolds in a context of conflict between several armed groups present in the region, ranging from the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla and groups formed after the demobilization of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – Army of the People (FARC-EP) guerrilla in 2016 (known today as FARC dissidents), to armed organizations formed after the demobilization of the former paramilitary groups in the mid-2000s, which include the Ejército Gaitanista de Colombia (EGC), also known as AGC or Clan del Golfo; and more recently the Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada (ACSN), from northern Colombia but recently reported to advance towards the south to the Magdalena Medio region.

The Regional Corporation for the Defense of Human Rights (CREDHOS), based in Barrancabermeja, was founded in 1987 and Amnesty International has monitored its situation for several years. In the year 2000, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) issued precautionary measures to CREDHOS due to threats from paramilitary groups. In 2016, the Colombian Government's Victims Unit recognized CREDHOS as a subject of collective reparation for having suffered, as a collective, serious human rights violations. Amnesty International's report [Hope at risk](#) of 2023 documented CREDHOS work defending human rights and the risk and threats faced by the organization because of its work.

CREDHOS has highlighted recent operations of the Colombian police and of the General Attorney Office against the EGC, for example, the capture of AKA "Bernabé" in September 2024, accused of being responsible of the murder of **Filadelfo Anzola**, a human rights defender member of CREDHOS. But CREDHOS analysis emphasizes the involvement of members and retired members of the military forces in the armed group EGC. For instance, in September 2024 a Police operation against the EGC resulted in the killing of AKA "Zeus", a retired member of the Army of Colombia, who until August had been accepted to testify before the transitional justice tribunal (the Special Jurisdiction for Peace – JEP) and who had previously been denounced by CREDHOS as a commander of the EGC in the Magdalena Medio region.

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

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: September 5, 2026

NAME: CREDHOS