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UA 50/22, **Update 1**, AI Index AMR 23/5871/2022 of 15 July 2022
The original index number is AI Index AMR 23/5677/2022 of 7 June 2022

COLOMBIA PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDER AT RISK

On July 5th, Yuli Velásquez, President of the Federation of Santander Fishers for Tourism and Environment (FEDEPESAN), an environmental organization operating in Barrancabermeja, Colombia, was the victim of an armed attack. Two unknown assailants shot at her, harming her bodyguard. Members of FEDEPESAN have previously suffered other armed attacks and threats. We urge Colombia's National Protection Unit (UNP) to grant protective measures to Yuli that adequately respond to the level of risk Yuli and FEDEPESAN members are facing.

Amnesty International is concerned for safety of the members of FEDEPESAN, an organization committed to the defense, promotion, and protection of human rights and the environment in the Magdalena medio region in Colombia. Various members of the organization have been victims of attempted murder. Yuli Velásquez is the most recent when she was approached by two unknown persons who shot at her from a motorcycle. Yuli managed to take cover, but her bodyguard was shot.

Write to the Director of the National protection Unit urging him to:

- immediately reassess the security situation of Yuli Velásquez and, in consultation with the defender, grant proper protective measures according to the risk she faces

Write to:

Mr. Augusto Rodríguez
Director of the National Protection Unit
Cra. 63 ##14-97
Bogotá
Colombia
Email: director@unp.gov.co
Salutation: Dear Mr. Rodríguez

And Copy:

His Excellency Carlos Arturo Morales López
Ambassador
Embassy of the Republic of Colombia
360 Albert Street, Suite 1002
Ottawa, ON K1R 7X7
Fax: 613 230 4416
Email: ecanada@cancilleria.gov.co

Additional information

Amnesty International considers that the Colombian state is not fully committed to protect Territory, Land and Environmental Defenders. In 2020, Amnesty International [denounced](#) that regardless of the extensive legislation on HRDs in the country, the State has done very little to offer comprehensive protection for TLERDs in the country, which is considered the deadliest for [Global Witness](#) and [Frontline Defenders](#).

In April 2021, Amnesty International launched an [urgent action](#) for CREDHOS, an environmental organization working in the Magdalena Medio region and faced similar risks than FEDEPESAN. The State took the measures we requested in the UA.

On 7 June, Amnesty International launched an [urgent action](#) calling on the Colombian government to live up to its 2009 commitment on implementing the Roundtable on Guarantee of Human Rights and effectively provide protection to Territory, Land, and environmental defenders in the region.