

URGENT ACTION

PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AT RISK

On 2 July, the Inter-Ecclesiastic Commission of Justice and Peace received confidential information about an ongoing plan to kill the Human Rights Defender Jani Silva. The plan is allegedly run by an armed group called “La mafia” because of the voluntary crops substitution program that Jani Silva is promoting in the Putumayo region (South West), Colombia. According to NGOs, “La Mafia” is behind the killings of 14 persons in the Putumayo region since the COVID-19 lockdown started. We are urging the National Protection Unit to increase the protection measures for Jani Silva.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Alfonso Campos Martinez
Director of the National Protection Unit
Address: Carrera 63 # 14 – 97 / Primer Piso
Puente Aranda / Bogotá D.C. Colombia
Email: director@unp.gov.co

Dear Mr. Campos,

I am writing to express concern for the safety Jani Silva, a human rights defender from the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazon Pearl (ADISPA), advocating for peace and the environment in Putumayo.

Jani has faced at least 5 different security incidents since the COVID-19 quarantine started. On July 2, Inter-ecclesial Commission of Justice and Peace (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz) received information of an ongoing plan to kill her.

We urge you grant Jani Silva an armoured vehicle for her transportation; give her access to a protected boat to ensure her transportation back and forth from the Peasant Reservation Area of the Amazon Pearl; change her bodyguards; and ensure there is police protection while she is at her home.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Jani Silva is an environmental, human rights and peace defender who has promoted the implementation of the Peace Agreement in the territory and has promoted reforestation initiatives, denouncing the socio-environmental effects of oil operations, including those of the Amerisur, a hydrocarbon exploitation company operating mainly in Putumayo basins.

Jani Silva is the legal representative from the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazon Pearl (Asociación para el Desarrollo Integral y Sostenible de la Perla Amazónica, ADISPA), which is in a community organization aimed to protect the rights of the communities that live in the Peasant Reservation Area of the Amazon Pearl.

Due to her role as a peace defender, armed groups have threatened to take her life in order to silence one of the strongest social causes' voices in Putumayo. Jani has also received threats for opposing an oil company in the area. She has been threatened with taking her life and the life of her family members if she continues to promote demonstrations for a healthy environment. The origin of the threats is unknown.

The most recent threats documented by Amnesty International include:

- On 29 November 2019 Jani suffered irregular supervision on her protection scheme by unidentified members of the police forces.
- On 16 January 2020 Jani suffered two security incidents. The first occurred around midday, when a man in a motorcycle watched her home for at least 10 minutes; the second happened around 2pm, when unknown people went to her working place to watch her.
- On 26 March 2020 the Inter-Church Commission for Truth and Peace (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz) informed Jani about an ongoing plan to kill her.
- On 17 April 2020 at around 2:30pm, Jani Silva heard 6 gunshots, less than 30 metres away from her home.
- On 22 April 2020 she heard three-gun shots less than 50 meters from her home and noises from the movement of people and a motorcycle around her house.
- In May 2020 several media and human rights organizations denounced the military surveillance of more than 130 people, including national and international journalists, human rights defenders and politicians. One of the human rights defender victims of military surveillance in the report included Jani Silva.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 18 August 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Jani Silva (She, her, hers)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/es/documents/amr23/2251/2020/es/>