

URGENT ACTION

THREATS AGAINST AN AMAZON DEFENDER

On September 10, 2024, Jani Silva, a defender of land, territory, and the environment and the president of ADISPA, an organization managing a peasant reserve zone in the Colombian Amazon (department of Putumayo), received a phone call threatening to "blow you up, car and all". Jani and ADISPA have protection measures in place, provided by the government's National Protection Unit (UNP). The threats make direct reference to killing her by attacking the armored vehicles provided for her protection, possibly using explosives. We call on the Colombian authorities to respond to these threats by conducting robust and effective investigations to identify those responsible and bring them to justice, with due process guarantees, and by providing timely and comprehensive protection to this human rights defender and her community, addressing the structural causes of the violence they face.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 84.24**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

Luz Adriana Camargo
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Bogotá DC, Colombia
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CC: Colombian Embassy in the United States
Ambassador Daniel García-Peña Jaramillo
1724 Massachusetts Ave, NW,
Washington, DC 20036
Email: estadosunidos@cancilleria.gov.co

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing to express my deep concern for the safety of human rights defenders and defenders of territory, land, and the environment in Colombia, in particular, **Jani Silva**, president of the Association for the Integral Sustainable Development of the Amazonian Pearl (ADISPA), a community organization managing the Peasant Reserve Zone of La Perla Amazónica in the municipality of Puerto Asís (in Putumayo, Colombia).

The Inter-Church Commission for Justice and Peace reported that on September 10, 2024, Jani Silva received a phone call threatening her life, with the caller explicitly stating that she would be attacked in one of the vehicles provided to ADISPA by the government's protection program through the National Protection Unit (UNP). In addition, in the afternoon of the same day, unknown men were seen around Jani Silva's house and ADISPA's office in the town center of Puerto Asís.

We are deeply concerned that armed groups present in this part of the country are directly threatening civil society organizations and stigmatizing them as collaborating with other criminal groups in the region. I call on you to act with the utmost diligence in the effective fulfilment of the duty of the Attorney General's Office to investigate the threats and attacks against Jani Silva and members of ADISPA, to identify those responsible for ordering and carrying out these attacks, and to bring them to justice, with due process guarantees, in order to prevent further attacks against human rights defenders in the Bajo Putumayo region.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Putumayo is located in the south of Colombia, on the border with Ecuador. It stands on the foothills of the Andes Mountain range and extends more than 300 km into the Amazon rainforest, making it rich in water, biodiversity, and natural resources. At the same time, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Putumayo (particularly on the border with Ecuador) is a coca leaf growing area, with more than 48,000 hectares dedicated to coca cultivation in 2022, a fifth of all the coca grown in Colombia that year.

In this context, in recent years a fierce dispute for control of the coca economy has broken out between armed groups known as the Comandos de la Frontera and the Carolina Ramírez Front, which are part of larger armed movements known as the Second Marquetalia and the Central General Staff (Estado Mayor Central, EMC) respectively. Both groups are currently in talks with the government of Gustavo Petro as part of its policy of Total Peace. Although the region experienced a period of relative calm in 2023, the confrontation between the two armed groups escalated again at the end of the year, and the pressure on civil society organizations, caught between the two, has returned.

One example of organizations and communities caught in the middle of this conflict is the Association for the Integral Sustainable Development of the Amazonian Pearl (ADISPA), created in the late 2000s to manage the Peasant Reserve Zone of La Perla Amazónica. The Peasant Reserve Zones (ZRC) are territorial entities created in the mid-1990s to recognize the collective rights of peasant communities and their environmentally sustainable production practices. The defense of the peasant community and its sustainable practices in the ZRC territory has brought ADISPA, and Jani Silva as its leader, into conflict with actors interested in other economic uses for the region, including the armed groups present there. This is the context of the attacks that Jani Silva has suffered in recent years.

Amnesty International issued two urgent actions in April and July 2020, and another in February 2021, calling on the Ministry of the Interior and its National Protection Unit (UNP) to take effective measures to protect Jani Silva's life, following the serious threats made against her. Later that year, more than 415,000 people sent messages of support to Jani Silva as part of the Write for Rights campaign. Today, the UNP provides Jani Silva with a personal protection program, and ADISPA as a whole with a collective protection program. However, Amnesty International has found that these programs are not fully tailored to the context and needs of Jani Silva, ADISPA and their work, and that there are recurrent shortcomings. The threats against Jani Silva have a serious impact on her life and her working conditions as leader of ADISPA, and on the community of the Peasant Reserve Zone of La Perla Amazónica.

On 13 September, the Inter-Church Commission for Justice and Peace reported the threats made against Jani Silva that week.

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

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: December 17, 2024

NAME: Jani Silva (she/her)