COLOMBIA
DEFENDER AT RISK IN COVID-19 QUARANTINE

On 17 April, at around 2:30pm, Jani Silva heard 6 gunshots at less than 30 metres from her residence in Puerto Asís in Putumayo, southwestern Colombia. On 22 April, she again heard three gunshots at less than 50 meters from her residence and noise from the movement of people and a motorcycle around her house.

These two incidents occurred after a confidential source provided information to the Inter-Church Commission for Truth and Peace (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz) on 26 March about a plan to kill Jani Silva. Amnesty International urges the Ministry of Interior to provide appropriate protection to her.

Jani Silva is a human rights defender active with the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazon Pearl (ADISPA). The Association advocates for peace and the environment in Putumayo.

Please send an email or tweet to the Minister of Interior.

* Share your worry about the safety of Putumayo human rights defender Jani Silva following the gunshot incidents on 17 and 22 April and the alleged death threat against her.
* Insist that Jani Silva is provided an armoured vehicle for her transportation, has access to a protected boat to ensure her transportation to and from the Peasant Reservation Area of the Amazon Pearl, and police protection of a standard she approves while she is at her home.

Write to (there is no postal service to Colombia during the pandemic)

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Minister of Interior
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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. She has also denounced the socio-environmental effects of oil operations, including those of Amerisur. Amerisur is a hydrocarbon exploitation company operating mainly in Putumayo basins. The company has the following partners in its operations: ONGC Videsh Ltd (India), Canacol Energy Ltd. (Canada), Pluspetrol (Netherlands), Pacific Exploration & Production (Frontera Energy, Canada), Vetra (Colombia) and Occidental Petroleum (USA).

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

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

Since President Iván Duque declared a national quarantine on March 24, at least 14 people who defend human rights and social leaders have been killed, 3 of them while they complied with the quarantine in their homes. The incident of 22 April occurred during the lockdown ordered by the Colombian government to avoid the spread of the COVID-19, which in Puerto Asís starts at 6pm and ends at 5am.