

URGENT ACTION

MURDERED DEFENDER'S FAMILY STILL IN DANGER

The family of killed defender Roberto Carlos Pacheco remain at risk after insufficient protection from authorities. On 3 October, the Police detained three of the five persons allegedly responsible for the killing. Shortly after the judge ordered their release pending trial and postponed the hearing to determine their pre-trial detention. The suspects didn't appear at their 12 October hearing and have not been located since. We call on the Public Prosecutor to investigate this murder, bring both the intellectual and material suspects to justice, and provide comprehensive and sustainable protection to the Pacheco family.

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

Zoraida Ávalos Rivera
Public Prosecutor

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Dear Public Prosecutor,

I write to you with regards to the murder of the environmental human rights defender Roberto Carlos Pacheco. On 10 September 2020, unknown attackers shot him dead. Since 2012, he received a series of death threats linked to his activism against illegal mining in the Tambopata Reserve, in the Peruvian Amazon's Madre de Dios region. These death threats were denounced before the authorities but were not adequately investigated and efficient protection was not granted to him.

Since Roberto Carlos was killed, his family reported that they are in danger after receiving insufficient protection measures from authorities. They are particularly concerned about Demetrio Pacheco, his father and Vice-president of the Tambopata Reserve Management Committee.

I call on you to thoroughly, independently and impartially investigate the killing of Roberto Carlos in line with human rights standards, including its possible relation to Roberto's and Demetrio's human rights work, to bring those suspected of both intellectual and material criminal responsibility to justice in fair trials and to provide comprehensive and sustainable protection to the Pacheco family as victims and human rights defenders, in consultation with them and according to their wishes.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2011, the Tambopata Reserve Management Committee works to end illegal mining and its negative effects on the environment. The threats and attacks against their members and other human rights defenders in the area began in 2012.

On 19 November 2015, environmental defender Alfredo Ernesto Vracko Neuenschwander was killed, after receiving several death threats for a complaint against illegal mining in the La Pampa area, in the Madre de Dios region. According to local human rights organizations, even though the victim's family identified those allegedly responsible, there is no progress on the investigations.

Demetrio Pacheco told Amnesty that his son Roberto Carlos Pacheco suffered three incidents of attacks and death threats in 2017. In March 2017, unknown attackers beat and threatened him at gunpoint and a knife. Later that month, unknown individuals threatened him with a gun to his mouth and destroyed some of his personal property. Later that year, someone left a bullet on his dining room table. All these threats were reported to the authorities. Since then, he faced at least several other serious incidents.

Roberto Carlos Pacheco was shot dead on 10 September 2020. His body was found near the San Juan community, in the Madre de Dios Region.

On 3 October, the Police detained three of the five persons allegedly responsible for his murder. Between 9 and 10 October, the judge ordered their release pending trial and postponed the hearing meant to determine their pre-trial detention. This decision was criticized by the Prosecutor's Office, the Police, and the victim's family. On 12 October, the suspects did not assist to a hearing in the court, and the authorities have not been able to locate them since then.

On 11 October, a media outlet made public new evidence gathered by the prosecution, which led to the identification of those suspected of both material and intellectual responsibility for the murder.

In recent years, the Madre de Dios region, in the Peruvian Amazon, has been the center of social and environmental conflicts caused by the growth of illegal mining, illegal logging and contamination by toxic metals. In January 2020, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders met with representatives of the Tambopata Reserve Management Committee and publicly expressed concern regarding their situation of risk.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 4 January 2021

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Roberto Carlos Pacheco and his family (They, them).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr46/3078/2020/en/>

And copies to:

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