

URGENT ACTION

WOMEN SEARCHERS NEEDS PROTECTION

Fundación Nydia Erika Bautista (FNEB) is a women searchers organization that promotes the rights of victims of enforced disappearance and fights impunity. On 24 October, in the context of new information arising regarding the enforced disappearance of Nydia Erika Bautista, in separate events, suspicious activity was recorded during an invitation-only gathering of women searchers and authorities and a hacking attempt against the institutional email of the organization was made. These situations are not new, and authorities need to act to prevent them for happening again. To do so, the Attorney General's Office must investigate the threats and attacks and, if possible and under rules of due process, bring those responsible to justice.

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

Luz Adriana Camargo
Attorney General
Attorney General's Office
Avenida Calle 24 No. 52 – 01
Bogotá D.C.

Email: direccion.derechoshumanos@fiscalia.gov.co

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing to express my deep concern with the continued threats and attacks against women searching for victims of enforced disappearance in Colombia, particularly the Fundación Nydia Erika Bautista (FNEB). Amnesty International has received information regarding intimidation acts against them and the women supported by them, and hacking attempts directed at their information systems. On 24 October, in the context of an invitation-only event for the commemoration of the Women Searchers Day held in Bogotá, the organization got aware of the presence of people strange to them and to the authorities invited to the event. After being asked to identify themselves or leave, they gave unsatisfactory explanations and refused to leave. That same day, FNEB director, Yanette Bautista, received two emails on behalf of "FNEB Support Team", claiming a change of password was required. The actual FNEB technical support team determined that these were hacking attempts directed at FNEB institutional email address.

Amnesty International has documented the risks faced by those who defend human rights in Colombia since 2020 and has detailed the international obligations that authorities in the Americas have regarding the protection of women searchers. It has also stressed out the dire situation these women face in the region and the kind of human rights violations they endure. FNEB has been subjected to different risks, threats and attacks in the past and I am concerned that the response by the Attorney General's Office seems to be insufficient, given that no person has been brought to justice for these acts.

*These intimidation acts and hacking attempts against FNEB come at a time where supposed new information has been being delivered to the Attorney General's Office and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace regarding the enforced disappearance of Nydia Erika Bautista in August 1987. **I urge you to exercise the utmost diligence in effectively fulfilling the Attorney General's Office's duty to investigate these acts, establish who is responsible for them and bring them to justice in fair trials to prevent further attacks to those who defend human rights and search for victims of enforced disappearance.***

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Yanette Bautista is the sister of Nydia Erika Bautista, who was forcibly disappeared by the XX Brigade of the Colombian National Army on August 30, 1987. With other family members and after years of fighting against impunity and searching for her sister and aunt, as well as many other victims of forced disappearance in the country, they created the Nydia Erika Bautista Foundation (**Fundación Nydia Erika Bautista**, FNEB).

FNEB was born when Yanette and her family were forced into exile because of the threats and attacks they received due to their work in the struggle for the rights of victims of enforced disappearance and those who search for them. In Geneva (Switzerland), in 1999, a group of human rights defenders from Germany, Switzerland, Colombia and Mexico met during their advocacy work with the United Nations and decided to form an organization named in honor of Nydia Erika Bautista. Over the years, the Bautista family decided to return to Colombia and in 2007 formally established **FNEB** in the country as an organization of victims of enforced disappearance and sexual violence that accompanies other victims in the same condition as its members. It has two marked identity characteristics. First, they are determined by the historical experience of the struggle for truth and justice for Nydia Erika Bautista and, therefore, they consider themselves an organization of relatives of victims of enforced disappearance. Second, it is formed mostly by women, and they fight for the rights to equality and to live a life free of violence, therefore they also consider themselves a women's organization. Today, with legal support, documentation, memory and communications, advocacy and research, administration and the Leadership School, FNEB directly supports victims from different parts of Colombia in 519 cases and carries out actions to promote the rights of victims of forced disappearance and, especially, of women searchers. Thanks to its initiative and impetus, Law 2364 of 2024 was issued, designed to protect a wide range of rights of women searchers in the country and built through their experience, documented by FNEB for years.

Amnesty International has followed **FNEB** situation and the enforced disappearance of Nydia Erika Bautista for years and has received extensive information on risks, threats and attacks they face. Recent events are not only the repetition of similar acts against them, but also, warnings of the possible escalation of violence against **FNEB** and other women searching for victims of enforced disappearance. Meanwhile, the Colombian Congress passed in July 2024 a bill enacting protections for the rights of women searchers in the country. The promises included in that law need to take the form of actions directed at improving their lives, these include investigating the threats and attacks they receive.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish. You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 11 2024. Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Yanette Bautista (she/her). **Fundación Nydia Erika Bautista.**

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: UA 116/15 Index: AMR 23/1948/2015 Issue Date: 26 June 2015