



Ms. Louise Winstanley
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21 June 2018

Our Ref: IUKA180095

Dear Ms. Winstanley,

On behalf of the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Simon Coveney T.D., I wish to apologise for the delay in replying to your correspondence of 12 December 2017 regarding the worrying level of assassinations of social leaders and human rights defenders in Colombia.

The Tánaiste has made clear in parliamentary questions that he condemns unreservedly any act of intimidation or violence perpetrated against those seeking to defend their rights or peacefully demonstrate. His sincere condolences are with the families of the victims who have tragically lost their lives in Colombia in recent times.


In his responses to parliamentary questions on 13 December 2017 and 16 January 2018 regarding the levels of violence and intimidation experienced by local communities in marginalised rural areas of Colombia, the Tánaiste reiterated that such violence is entirely unacceptable and that it remains a matter of great concern. He urged the Government of Colombia to ensure that all violent incidents are thoroughly investigated and their perpetrators brought to justice.

Ireland delivered its statement during the Universal Period Review of Colombia at the United Nations in Geneva on 10 May 2018. Ireland used this opportunity to express its concern in relation to the troubling increase in attacks against human rights defenders and social leaders in Colombia. Ireland's statement recommended that Colombia take all necessary steps in order to protect human rights defenders against threats and attacks and to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Ireland also noted challenges regarding the reincorporation process and ensuring the participation of victims at the centre of the implementation of transitional justice arrangements.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that Ireland remains committed to supporting peace and human rights in Colombia through the full implementation of the country's peace accords.

Yours sincerely,


Clare Brosnan
Private Secretary