

PRESS KIT - JUNE 2010

FBI COLOMBIA PRESENTS



Jorge Molano Rodríguez

PBI has accompanied Jorge Molano since 2009.



Jorge Molano, Luisa Vidal (PBI) and Alexis Mosquera (CAVIDA).

For more than twenty years, Jorge Molano has been an independent human rights lawyer and represents victims in emblematic cases that involve high-ranking military officers and public servants, including José Obdulio Gaviria, former presidential advisor to President Uribe Vélez.

PBI has accompanied Jorge Molano during his work on the case of Operation Dragon, a plan designed at senior levels of the Colombian government, together with State security forces and private companies, to murder human rights activists, trade union leaders, and members of the opposition in Colombia¹. The Superintendency of Public Services in Cali contracted two private security companies to gather information on 170 activists. This intelligence work was supported by the National Army's Third Brigade, the National Police in Cali, and the Administrative Department of Security (DAS)². In 2004, Senator Alexander López Maya (Demo-

cratic Pole) was alerted to this criminal plan. According to the information received, Mr. Molano, Berenice Celeyta, the human rights activist and president of the Association for Social Investigation and Research (NOMADESC), and several trade union leaders, including Luís Antonio Hernández Monroy were at the top of the list of activist to investigate. «The case of Operation Dragon can be seen as a precedent to the DAS's current illegal interceptions», states Mr. Molano, as «persecution by the State, illegal surveillance, and the infiltration of security details leads one to believe that the lives of human rights activists have been put in the hands of their victimisers».

Mr. Molano is a legal advisor for SEMBRAR Corporation, NOMADESC, Utopia Legal Corporation, and the Agriculture and Mining Federation from Southern Bolívar (Fedeagromisbol)³.

IN 2000, THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTED JORGE MOLANO PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AS A MEMBER OF THE SEMBRAR ORGANISATION

Cases represented by Mr. Molano

Currently, Mr. Molano represents victims or their family members in the cases of those forcibly disappeared from the Palace of Justice in 1985; the massacre against the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó on 21 February 2005; the DAS's espionage against organisations, activists and judges; the extrajudicial executions of Jhonny Silva Aranguren and Alejandro Uribe Chacón; Operation Dragon; extrajudicial executions —«false positives»— in San José del Guaviare, southern Bolívar and southern Cesar; and the cases against Fernando

Londoño Hoyos, Germán Vargas Lleras and Francisco Santos Calderón. The following people are under investigation in these cases:

GENERALS:

Jesús Armando Arias Cabrales, Iván Ramírez Quintero, Héctor Jaime Fandiño, Carlos Alberto Ospina Ovalle, Julio Charry Solano, and Rito Alejo del Río.

COLONELS:

Luis Alfonso Plazas Vega, Edilberto Sánchez Rubiano, Fernando Blanco, Orlando Espinosa Beltrán, Néstor Iván Duque, Julián Villate Leal, and Germán Huertas.



In March 2010, the 1st Specialised Court of Antioquia sentenced retired army captain Guillermo Gordillo to twenty years of prison for having participated in the massacre of the eight people from the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó. Jorge Molano provides legal representation for the family members of the murdered victims.



Among other activities, Mr. Molano represents family members of victims in the cases of extrajudicial executions —«false positives»— in San José del Guaviare, southern Bolívar and southern Cesar.

Photo: *campesinos* from the Sur de Bolívar region

Protection Measures

In 2000, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights granted Jorge Molano precautionary measures as a member of the SEMBRAR Corporation. Owing to public exposure in the media, which has revealed the cases that he represents and the identities of the people involved, Mr. Molano has been forced to utilise armed security detail from the Ministry of the Interior and Justice since March 2009.

PBI has expressed its concern for security incidents and acts of surveillance affecting the lawyer Jorge Molano.

On 1 December 2009, the persons assigned to protecting Mr. Molano learned that on three different occasions over the previous week several men dressed in civilian clothes attempted to access his apartment.

When the security guard at the residential compound where the lawyer lives asked who they were, these men refused to identify themselves⁴.

It should be highlighted that since December 2009 the Ministry of the Interior and the DAS have been informed of surveillance being carried out on the lawyer's office⁵. It should also be noted that since 2004 the DAS has illegally intercepted Mr. Molano's communications⁶ and that the lawyer has demonstrated an increase in these interceptions since December 2009⁷.



Jorge Molano and Patricia Goethe (PBI) in Bogotá.

Web pages of the organisations Mr. Molano legally advises

- www.sembrarcolombia.com
- nomadesc.blogspot.com
- www.fedeagromisbol.org

1. «Baseless Prosecutions of Human Rights Defenders in Colombia: In the Dock and Under the Gun», Human Rights First, February 2009, page 31
2. Ibid.
3. «En grave riesgo seguridad personal de Jorge Molano, abogado defensor de Derechos Humanos», Sembrar Corporation and others, 3 December 2009
4. «GRAVE INCIDENTE DE SEGURIDAD PARA LA VIDA DEL ABOGADO JORGE ELIECER MOLANO Y SU FAMILIA» Sembrar, NOMADESC, UTOPIA, FCSPP and other organisations, Urgent Action, 1 December 2009
5. Ibid.
6. «Hostigamiento del abogado Jorge Molano», Human Rights First, Press Release, 7 December 2009
7. «Surveillance and intimidation of human rights defenders Jorge Eliecer Molano and his family», Human Rights First, Press Release, 5 December 2009.