



## **New Acts of harassment against Soraya Gutierrez Argüello, CAJAR Vice President and CCEEU spokesperson.**

The Coordination Colombia Europe United States (CCEEU), the Colombian Platform for Human Rights, Democracy, and Development (PCDHDD), the Alliance of Social and Related Organizations, and the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective (CAJAR) denounce that on the night of Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, in Bogotá, two unidentified individuals illegally and secretly entered the home of human rights lawyer **Soraya Gutiérrez Argüello**.

Ms. Gutiérrez is currently the vice president of CAJAR, spokesperson for the CCEEU, and a delegate named by the Coalition for Human Rights to the National Security Guarantees Commission. This body was created by the Final Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of Stable and Lasting Peace and was reactivated by the current administration. Its function is to formulate a public policy to dismantle the groups that have arisen out of paramilitary structures and their support networks.

The aforementioned event occurred when the human rights lawyer was not in Bogotá and although there were valuable items such as jewelry and others in the home, only three laptops, two speakers, a camera, and other items of no value were stolen. The break-in was thwarted at 9:56 pm, due to the activation of an alert by the complex's security. However, the intruders fled, abandoning the backpacks they had used to carry the equipment.

When the human rights defender arrived home, she found all the rooms in complete disarray, including the bathroom, kitchen, and dresser drawers, as well as bookshelves that had all been thoroughly searched, and the contents were thrown on the floor. The entire house was searched, showing that the two men had sufficient time to go through and inspect the whole home, leaving a clear message that they were there, or that the aim was to steal information from Ms. Gutierrez and her family.

Just a few days earlier, on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, CAJAR lawyer **Juan David Romero** had his cell phone stolen en route to a meeting related to the National Security Guarantees Commission. Mr. Romero supports Ms. Gutiérrez in her work with this commission. The cell phone was used in an attempt to access institutional files and the passwords were changed to prevent recovery.

Throughout her career as a human rights defender, **Soraya Gutiérrez Argüello** has been a victim of multiple attacks against her life and integrity, such as threats against herself and her family,<sup>1</sup> psychological torture,<sup>2</sup> assassination attempts, and attacks<sup>3</sup> involving members of the state security forces and intelligence agencies, such as the now-defunct DAS. These victimizing events were recently presented and once again documented in the framework of the case before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights against the Colombian State for the systematic and continuous persecution of CAJAR members.<sup>4</sup>

As a precedent to the arbitrary entrance into Ms. Gutierrez's home, less than a year ago, a similar situation occurred in the home of human rights defender **Yessika Hoyos Morales**, also a CAJAR lawyer.

We request that the national government hand over the intelligence files and notes in which the human rights lawyer and other CAJAR members appear, as well as move forward on a dialogued agreement relative to a public policy on guarantees for defenders and the public recognition of their work.

We demand that the Attorney General's Office of the Nation perform an exhaustive and contextual investigation of these most recent acts of aggression against the defender and lawyer **Soraya Gutiérrez Argüello**, as the threats, attacks, harassment, and psychological torture of which she was a victim in the past, continue in impunity.

Bogotá, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

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<sup>1</sup> [Relato de defensora de DD. HH. Soraya Gutiérrez ante la Corte Interamericana: ¿condenarán al Estado? - NoticiasCaracol](#), 2022

<sup>2</sup> [La tortura psicológica del G-3 contra las mujeres - CAJAR](#) (Capítulo del libro Chuzadas, de Julián Martínez), 2016

<sup>3</sup> [COLOMBIA: Garantías para la labor de defensa de derechos humanos de la abogada Soraya Gutiérrez Argüello - CAJAR](#), 2017

<sup>4</sup> [Corte IDH juzgará a Colombia por persecución ilegal al colectivo Cajar - Cortes - Justicia - ELTIEMPO.COM](#), 2022