

via fax: 011 57 1 337 58 90/ 342 05 92 <b>Senor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez</b> Presidente de la Republica de Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 565 7682 <b>Dr. Francisco Santos Calderon</b> Vicepresidente de la Republica de Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 <b>Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio</b> Fiscalia General de la Nacion, Colombia	

April 14, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We continue to be very concerned for **Danilo Rueda and other members of the Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission (Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz)**. They have been working with Afro-descendent communities in the Curvarado River Basin and Jiguiamando River Basin, Department of Chocó. These communities have declared themselves "humanitarian refuge zones," insisting that all armed groups stay out. Recently, paramilitaries have set up camp opposite Pueblo Nuevo in the Jiguiamiando region.

On March 29, Danilo Ruedo received a written death threat labeling Justicia y Paz members as guerrillas. On March 31, five members were abducted from Pueblo Nuevo and Bella Flor Remacho by men who identified themselves as the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). They were released unharmed on April 8, but Rueda and other members of Justicia y Paz continue to be followed and watched by gunmen.

On April 3 at 3:45 pm, two men in a car with tinted windows followed Danilo Rueda along several streets; he was on foot and managed to get away from them. At 10.30 pm that day, he and another Justicia y Paz activist, **Abilio Peña**, were followed by another vehicle as they traveled by bus. They managed to get away.

On April 4, **Rafael Figueroa**, a lawyer working with the organization, boarded a bus after he left the office at 10 pm. When he realized he was being followed by two men, one of them armed, he got off the bus; the men ran after him, but he escaped.

We remind you of your obligations to human rights defenders, as laid out in the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the Organization of American States Human Rights Defenders in the Americas resolutions; and in repeated recommendations made to them by the United Nations.

Because of our deep concern for the safety of **Danilo Rueda and other members of Justicia y Paz, we urge that you**

- Conduct a full and impartial investigation into the death threat of March 29, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice;
- Take immediate and effective action deemed appropriate by those under threat, to ensure that members of Justicia y Paz can safely carry out their legitimate and important work for the defense of human rights;
- Take immediate action, in line with stated government commitments and UN recommendations, to dismantle paramilitary groups.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Coordinator

cc: Ambassador Luis Alberto Moreno , Embassy of Colombia ~ via fax: 1 202 232 8643  
 William B Wood, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011-571-315-2197  
 Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.2628  
 U.S. Senators DeWine and Voinovich ~ via fax, email  
 U.S. Representatives Brown, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via fax, email

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**The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter:**