

via fax: 011 57 1 566 20 71 Señor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez President of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 222 18 74 Dr. Camilo Ospina Bernal Minister of National Defense, Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 Dr. Mario German Iguaran Attorney General of Colombia	

May 14, 2006

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned about the reported murders of 20 people in and around the Puerto Nubia School in the village of Sanza, in San Juan de Arama municipality, Meta Department. On April 15, troops from the Colombian Army's Mobile Brigade No. 12 attacked a house where some 50 civilians—including many children and older adults—had taken refuge.

The army's gunfire killed at least eight people at the house, including 12-year old **Yorladys Osorio González**, **Rafael Pinzon**, **Gerardo Ríos**, and four members of the Prieto family: brothers **Audom Prieto** and 15-year old **Weymar Prieto**, their father **Floriber Prieto** and their cousin **Jesus Prieto**.

Two more residents were apparently killed elsewhere. The body of **Alexander Medina**, a minor, was seen floating down the Sanza River. Residents recovered the tortured body of a woman believed to be either Rubiela Castillo, who disappeared a day before the military operation, or another village resident named Nina.

About 50 residents of the village were detained by the army on April 16 and remain disappeared. The army is not allowing anyone, even the International Red Cross, into or out of the area. There are rumors that the detained residents have already been murdered and presented as rebels killed in combat.

We wrote to you January 26 to protest murders and disappearances in this region by paramilitaries, whom witnesses recognized as active duty soldiers from the Counter-Guerrilla Battalion No. 42 of the Army's 4th Brigade.

As a result of our deep concern for the safety of the civilian population of Meta, we strongly urge you to:

- immediately conduct a full and impartial investigation into the killings and disappearances of civilians by the Colombian Army's Mobile Brigade No. 12 in Sanza, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice;
- reveal what steps you are taking to protect the civilian population in the area;
- guarantee that all groups in both the national and the departmental governments respect the human rights of all Colombian citizens, and immediately stop the persecution, killing, arbitrary detention, and forced disappearances of all civilians in Meta Department, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

cc: Andres Pastrana, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax
 William B Wood US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax
 Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax
 Dr. Francisco Santos, Vice-President of Colombia ~ via fax
 Dr. Michael Frulin, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Colombia office ~ via fax
 US Senators DeWine & Voinovich ~ via email
 US Representatives Brown, Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

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