

via fax: 011 57 1 337 58 90/ 342 05 92 Senor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez Presidente de la Republica de Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 565 7682 Dr. Francisco Santos Vicepresidente
via fax: 011 571 640 04 91 Dr. Volmar Antonio Pérez Ortiz Defensoría del Pueblo, Colombia	via fax: : 011 571 342.97.23 Dr. Edgardo José Maya Villazón Procurador
via fax: : 011 57 1 336 0182 Dr Diego Palacios Betancourt , Ministro de la Protección Social, Colombia	

September 12, 2006

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned for the safety of **members of unions, especially SINALTRAINAL, in Colombia**. A series of attacks against the very existence of SINALTRAINAL has occurred in different regions of Colombia, ranging from a raid on the union's national headquarters in Bogotá, to the assassination of one of its activists.

At approximately 12:15 a.m. on August 3, 2006, uniformed men identifying themselves as members of the Judicial Police (SIJIN) entered and searched the SINALTRAINAL headquarters in Bogotá, claiming it was a security sweep for the inauguration of President Uribe. That morning SIJIN agents were seen filming outside the union's headquarters. On August 10, a member of the Executive Committee of the same branch was threatened when the union was carrying out peaceful protests in front of Nestlé plants in Bugalagrande and Bogotá against the unjustified firing of 90 temporary workers and four SINALTRAINAL workers with indefinite contracts.

At 11:00 p.m. on August 17, 2006, **Carlos Arturo Montes Bonilla** was assassinated near his home north of Barrancabermeja, leaving his partner, Maria Elvia Álvarez Delgado and 7 orphaned children. Carlos had worked for nearly 30 years in the Infants Club for the workers of ECOPETROL. dual membership in both SINTRAHOCAR and SINALTRAINAL, He also participated in union protests against Coca Cola and other multinationals.

In the early hours of August 18, 2006, a condolence card signed "Death to Trade Unionists" was left at the home of **Héctor Jairo Paz**, a worker at Nestle de Colombia S.A. and a leader in the Bugalagrande branch of SINALTRAINAL

As a result of our concern for the safety of these and other unionists in Colombia, we strongly urge you to:

- Take immediate and effective action to protect all union members in Colombia and stop the threats against them and the assassinations of their members;
- Conduct a full and impartial investigation into the incidents described above, make the results public and bring to justice those responsible;
- Immediately cease the practice of "voluntary registrations," which are actually a cover-up for raids that put at grave risk the lives of unionists as well as the very existence of their 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. Michael Frulin, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Colombia office ~ via fax
Dr. Mario German Iguaran, Attorney General ~ via fax
Paolo Carozza US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ 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: