

via fax: 011 57 1 337 5890 <b>Señor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez</b> Presidente de la Republica de Colombia	via fax: 011 57 76 842 843 <b>Sr. Hugo Heliodoro Aguilar Naranjo</b> Gobernación de Santander de Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 ext 2017 <b>Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio</b> Fiscalía General de la Nación de Colombia	

July 6, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are gravely concerned for the safety and welfare of members of the non-governmental **Regional Human Rights Corporation (CREDHOS)**, especially **David Ravelo Crespo**, the Secretary General of the organization, and **Georgina Morales**, a student leader and member of the youth wing of CREDHOS. In recent months, David Ravelo Crespo has received a number of telephone calls at the CREDHOS office in the city of Barrancabermeja, Department of Santander, from unidentified callers threatening him with death. At the time of the most recent call, May 31, he was in hiding in Bogotá, fearing for his safety. He has also reported being followed continually by members of army-backed paramilitary groups operating in Barrancabermeja.

In February, 2005 an attempt was made on Georgina Morales' life, but the attack failed when the gunman was forced to flee after people intervened. On May 24, two armed men on a motorbike approached a classmate of Georgina calling her by Georgina's name. When they realized that she was not Georgina, they instructed her to tell Georgina to leave Barrancabermeja within three days. Because of the danger to her life, Georgina Morales has been forced to flee Barrancabermeja and is currently in hiding.

Our concerns for the safety of other CREDHOS members are heightened by the death of **Stivenson Torres**, a CREDHOS member, killed on April 24, 2005 by paramilitaries in Barrancabermeja. In March, 2005 CREDHOS and the Research and Popular Education Center (CINEP) launched a report which documented at least 170 cases of forced "disappearances" in Barrancabermeja between 2000 and 2003, the majority being committed by army-backed paramilitaries.

As a result of our concern for the safety of David Ravelo Crespo, Georgina Morales and other members of CREDHOS, following the death threats against them, and the killing of CREDHOS member Stivenson Torres, we strongly urge you to:

- Take all measures deemed appropriate by David Ravelo Crespo, Georgina Morales and other members of CREDHOS to guarantee their safety;
- Immediately conduct a full and impartial investigation into these threats and into the killing of Stivenson Torres, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice.

Finally, we are deeply concerned that **your government has taken no effective action** against paramilitary groups in the Barrancabermeja area **despite UN recommendations** to combat and dismantle these groups.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Coordinator

cc: Luis Alberto Moreno, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ 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  
 CREDHOS ~ via US mail  
 U.S. Senators DeWine and Voinovich ~ via email  
 U.S. Representatives Brown, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

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