

I R T F

InterReligious Task Force on Central America
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via fax: 011 57 1 337 5890 Señor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez Presidente de la Republica de Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 ext 2017 Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio Fiscalia General de la Nación de Colombia
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August 30, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We condemn the extrajudicial killing of **Jorge Mendoza Lesmes**, age 32, committed by a patrol of the 18th Brigade of the National Army on Saturday, August 13, 2005 at 8pm on the main roadway that connects Esmeralda with Arauquita, at the point of Vereda San Carlos, in Arauca Department.

The brigade falsely reported that Mendoza was speeding and almost ran them over at their checkpoint. According to passenger Ezequiel Peña, Mendoza was driving just 30 km/hour, aware of the permanent checkpoint. When he saw the rifles, he put on his turn signal and parked his car.

Mendoza was driving after the 6pm motor vehicle curfew. But that does not give the army justification to riddle him with bullets.

We urge you to

- conduct a thorough investigation into the killing of Jorge Mendoza Lesmes, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice
- revoke the 6pm curfew on motor vehicles, which seems to be arbitrary and excessive, in order to prevent future tragedies

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
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: