

via fax: 011 57 1 342 0592 / 337 58 90 Sr. Álvaro Uribe Vélez President, Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2022 / 2017 Dr. Luis Camilo Osorio Attorney General, Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 560 4630/566 4573 Sr. Sabas Pretelt de la Vega Ministro del Interior y de Justicia, Colombia	

December 13, 2004

Dear Sirs:

We, the members of the InterReligious Task Force on Central America, are seriously concerned for the safety of journalist **Claudia Julieta Duque** and her family following a recent death threat against her 10 year old daughter. It came two days after **Claudia Julieta Duque** was placed under the security of the Ministry of Interior's protection program for journalists, following repeated threats against her in recent years. At 7:52 PM on November 17, **Claudia Julieta Duque** received a telephone call in which an unknown male caller asked if he was speaking to her. He also asked for the name of her daughter before threatening to kill her daughter.

The caller's number was registered on her telephone, and **Claudia Julieta Duque** informed the Jose Alvear Restrepo' Lawyers' Collective about the threatening phone call. When members of this organization dialed the number, a man who reportedly answered the phone confirmed his address was that of a police station in the capital Bogotá.

Claudia Julieta Duque has written articles on freedom of speech in Colombia. She also works with non-governmental organizations such as the 'Jose Alvear Restrepo' Lawyers' Collective, where she has been researching the case of Colombian comedian and journalist **Jaime Garzon**, who was killed on August 13, 1999. Criminal proceedings found **paramilitary leader Carlos Castaño** guilty of the crime and implicated several members of the security forces in the killing. As a result of threats, **Claudia Julieta Duque** was forced to temporarily leave the country in 2001.

We urge you, the leaders of Colombia, to take the following actions:

- Take appropriate measures to guarantee the safety of **Claudia Julieta Duque**, members of her family, and all journalists who investigate alleged crimes;
- Conduct an immediate, complete and impartial investigation into the death threats made against **Claudia Julieta Duque**, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice;
- Ensure that the Ministry of Interior's protection program for journalists has adequate resources in order to provide more effective protection to journalists.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

Copies to: 'José Alvear Restrepo' Lawyers' Collective, AA 33035, Bogotá, Colombia
 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
 Charles Barclay, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.2628
 U.S. Senators Voinovich and DeWine
 U.S. Representatives Kucinich, Kaptur, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones

UA 318/04 Colombia

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