

via fax: 011 57 1 337 58 90/ 342 05 92 <b>Señor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez</b> Presidente de la República de Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 <b>Dr. Mario German Iguaran</b> Attorney General/ Fiscal General, Colombia
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January 26, 2006

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned about the murder of four campesinos **Arelis Diaz, Alcibiades Pachon, Luis Guillermo** and **Rafael Quinto** by Plains Self-Defense paramilitaries in Mata Bambu, Puerto Lleras municipality, Meta Department, on January 5. We are equally disturbed by the paramilitaries' disappearance of four siblings, **Yurley** (age 17), **Esteban** (age 13), **Rafael** and **Amir Rodríguez**, also from Mata Bambu. Several others were wounded. Among the paramilitaries were two men recognized as active duty soldiers from the Counter-Guerrilla Battalion No. 42 of the Army's 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade.

The massacre culminated two weeks of attacks and disappearances of area residents by military and paramilitary forces. Disappeared were **Norberto Lujan** (El Vergel, Vistahermosa municipality), **Ecelino Piñeda Peña** (Santa Lucia), **Gildardo de Jesus Salinas Piedrahita** (Villa La Paz, Puerto Lleras municipality) and **Rosabel Rincon** (Santo Domingo); all remain missing as of January 18. On January 3, soldiers detained eight campesinos in Santo Domingo; as of January 18, seven are still missing.

Soldiers told members of the Human Rights Commission of the Güejar River Region in Puerto Toledo that the same thing that happened in Mata Bambu would soon happen to them. When Commission members visited Lt. García, head of Brigade No. 4, García said he was not committed to providing security for civilians in Puerto Toledo. Lt. García then blocked residents of Puerto Toledo from fleeing the town.

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

- ▶ Immediately conduct a full and impartial investigation into the killings in Mata Bambu and the numerous disappearances between December and January 2006, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice ;
- ▶ Reveal what steps you are taking to protect the civilian population in the area;
- ▶ Conduct a full, impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups in Meta;
- ▶ Immediately act to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Coordinator

cc: Ambassador Luis Alberto Moreno ~ via fax  
 Ambassador William B Wood, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax  
 Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Dept ~ via fax  
 US Senators DeWine & Voinovich ~ via email  
 US Representatives Brown, Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

2006/01/20-Meta-Colombia

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