

via fax: 011 571 566 2071 Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez President of Colombia	via fax: 011 571 570 2000 Dr. Mario Hernán Iguarán Arana Attorney General of Colombia
Via U.S. mail Doctor Francisco Santos Calderón Vice-President of Colombia	via fax: (571) 428-7634 Brigadier General Óscar Adolfo Naranjo Trujillo Director General of the Nacional Police

June 14, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the **attack on the office of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR)** on June 2 in Bogotá. Unknown persons broke the lock and part of the door when they forcibly entered the FOR house/office. They destroyed electronic equipment and stole two computers that contained the organization's records, clothing and cash; they did not steal other items of value that were in plain sight. In the days before the break-in, individuals had been observed watching the house on several occasions.

FOR accompanies Colombian groups that work for justice and peace using nonviolent means. Recently, FOR has worked on issues such as the use of demobilized combatants in army operations; the presence of and threats by paramilitaries in the San José de Apartadó area; and the May 14 murder of Francisco Puerta, a former leader of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, about which we wrote you on June 11. This community has been the target of attacks by all the armed groups and is covered by protective measures from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. In addition, because of the documented collaboration between highest level Colombian military and civilian officials and paramilitaries, FOR has led efforts to end United States military aid to the Colombian Army.

This break-in constitutes a serious violation against an international human rights organization that gives protective unarmed accompaniment to threatened Colombians. The violation occurs in the context of threats against other human rights organizations working in Colombia. The climate of intolerance is reflected in statements issued by Vice-President Francisco Santos at the Council of the Americas during his recent visit to Washington when he accused human rights organizations of being motivated by purely economic interests.

To ensure that FOR can safely carry out its work, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out a prompt and complete investigation of the June 2 break-in of the FOR office and bring those responsible to justice;
- support the work of national and international human rights organizations in Colombia by issuing a presidential directive on human rights organizations, updating Directive 7 of 2001 issued by former President Andrés Pastrana.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

Copies: Doctor Carlos Franco, Presidencial Programo on Human Rights ~ via fax
 Doctor Juan Manuel Santos, Minister of Defense ~ via fax
 Susana Pimiento-Chamorro, Fellowship of Reconciliation-Colombia Program ~ via e-mail
 Carolina Barco Isakson, Colombian Ambassador to the United States ~ via fax
 William B. Word, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax
 Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich and U.S. Representatives Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

FOR_Colombia

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