

via fax: 786-845-2525 Juan Mario Fernandez President, Spectrum Flowers - Miami, FL, USA	via fax: 011 57 1 337 58 90/ 342 05 92 Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez Presidente de la República de Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2017 Dr. Mario Germán Iguaran Arana Attorney General, Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 565 76 82 Dr. Francisco Santos Calderon Vice-president of the Republic, Colombia

April 1, 2008

Dear Sirs:

We write to you with great concern for flower workers in Colombia. As the sole distributor of flowers grown at Exportaciones Bochica S.A. CI Flower Company (Bochica Farms), Spectrum has a responsibility to defend the rights of its workers and to ensure full compliance with Colombian labor law and International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions.

On January 28, 2007, workers formed the Unión de Trabajadores de Exportaciones Bochica S.A. CI and filed for legal recognition the next day. They soon began receiving death threats. To date, Exportaciones Bochica refuses to negotiate with the union, and Spectrum Flowers has not responded to requests for intervention.

Hugo Cifuentes, the manager of Exportaciones Bochica, held a meeting with workers and made it clear that he did not want a union. Shortly thereafter, he approached several union members and pressured them to disaffiliate. At another meeting, Cifuentes warned workers of the dangers of forming a union in Colombia; individuals in military uniform were present. Two days after this meeting, the union president, treasurer, and auditor received written death threats from the paramilitary group Aguilas Negras del Oriente.

In April 2007 the workers reported that they never received protection from the government's well-publicized Trade Union Protection Program, because (as the government claims) the union's registration was denied, meaning that they are not technically members of a union. Because of the combined company/paramilitary strategy at Bochica Farms, only seven union workers remain. They are now affiliated with The National Union of Agro-industry Workers (SINTRAINAGRO) who demanded negotiations in October 2007. The company has not complied. They are legally required to negotiate but the government of Colombia is not enforcing this rule.

As a result of these hostile activities, and in view of Colombia's questionable history of dealing with union members and leaders, we strongly urge you to:

- actively protect these workers from threats and intimidation, by either managers at the company or by paramilitaries and other armed groups;
- conduct an independent investigation into any and all allegations of threats or intimidation;
- take any action necessary to help negotiate in good faith with the workers and to ensure a safe working environment in which all labor rights can be freely exercised and respected;
- respect and defend the rights of all workers to form and participate in a union freely and without fear of reprisal, as defined by both Colombian and international law.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Trade Union Confederation – Central Unitaria de Trabajadores de Colombia. via fax: 011 57 1 251 1432
Sr. Carlos Holguín Sardi, Ministro del Interior y de Justicia, Colombia. via fax: 011 57 1 560 4630
Ambassador Carolina Barco Isakson, Embassy of Colombia in the US. via fax: 1 202 232 8643
Ambassador William Brownfield, Embassy of the US in Colombia. via fax: 011 571 315 2197
Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Dept. via fax: 202.647.2628
Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. via fax: 202.458.3992 or 202.458.6215
US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, Latta, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email
3/20/08LEAPColombia

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