

Via fax: 011 57 1 337 5890 Sr. Pres. Álvaro Uribe Velez President of the Republic of Colombia	Via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 Dr. Guillermo Mendoza Diago Acting Attorney General of the Republic of Colombia
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June 25, 2010

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the murder of **Nelson Camacho González**, a member of the local branch of the oil worker's union USO (*Unión Sindical Obrera*). He was shot on June 17 at 5:30 a.m. by gunmen traveling on a motorcycle in the city of Barrancabermeja, Santander Department. The killing came almost a month after a paramilitary group calling itself Joint Cleansing Command (*Comando Conjunto de Limpieza*) issued a written death threat against 17 non-governmental human rights organizations, trade unions including USO, peasant farmer organizations, and organizations representing forcibly displaced people working in Barrancabermeja and the Magdalena Medio region of Santander Department.

The threat, received on May 26, said: "Because in Barrancabermeja, the guerrilla is within all those organizations that call themselves displaced, human rights defenders, trade unions. . . that think that they are untouchable. We will exterminate those that oppose development and security in the country. (...) We will not stop, we will exterminate you. Traitors of the homeland, you leave or you will be dead."

This killing and threat are the latest in a series of killings and threats to USO members that have been occurring for years. Since 2003 we have written at least seven letters expressing our concern about the assassinations and human rights violations continually targeting USO in Barrancabermeja.

Once again we **strongly urge** that you

- provide USO members in Barrancabermeja and other trade unionists, social activists and human rights defenders with effective protection in strict accordance with their wishes;
- carry out a full, swift and impartial investigation into the killing of Nelson Camacho González, make the results public and bring those responsible justice.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: Oil Workers Union (USO) ~ via US mail
 Sr. José Luis Daza, Representative of the Permanent Office of International Labor Organization in Colombia ~ via US mail
 Carolina Barco Isakson, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
 William Brownfield, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.315.2197
 Nan N. Fife, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173
 Benjamin Montanez, Desk Officer for Andean Affairs, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173
 Christian Salazar Volkmann, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Colombia office ~ via fax: 011-571. 658-3300
 Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
 Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Colombia member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
 US Senators Brown & Voinovich ~ via email
 US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

UA 47/09 update

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