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| via fax: 011 57 1 337 5890 Excmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos President of Colombia | via fax: 011 57 1 4149000 ext. 2396 Sr. Eduardo Montealegre Lynett Attorney General of Colombia |
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June 11, 2012

Dear Sirs:

We are very concerned about attacks and intimidation against **Monica Roa**, human rights defender and Program Director of Women's Link Worldwide (WLW) in Bogotá. On the evening of May 7, while **Monica Roa** and two of her colleagues were working in the WLW office, the power supply was cut and an unidentified individual fired gunshots into the office, breaking the security glass above Monica Roa's head. Although she and her colleagues escaped possible serious injury or death, we believe their lives are in danger.

This attack occurred on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the 2006 decision by the Constitutional Court to lift the total ban on abortion by allowing three legal exceptions, including risk to the life of the woman or girl and when she is a victim of rape (decision C-355/2006). The decision has not been implemented because the Procurator General and the Procurator Delegate for the Defense of Infancy, Adolescence and Family Rights are publicly advocating criminalizing abortion in all circumstances. Monica Roa and colleagues, who were instrumental in the passage of C-355/2006, were preparing campaign actions to highlight the failure of implementation of the Constitutional Court ruling

The attack on May 7 is the latest of a series of acts of intimidation against her and her colleagues at WLW which began as harassment (involving human excrement) and death threats in 2005 and have since intensified into burglaries (on April 23 and on two previous occasions). Following the first acts of intimidation in 2005, the government granted her protection measures.

Because we are deeply concerned for the safety of Monica Roa and her colleagues, we **strongly urge** that you

- immediately investigate fully the attacks described above, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- publicly recognize as legitimate the work of human rights defenders addressing sexual and reproductive rights issues;
- review and strengthen Monica Roa's protection measures and extend them to WLW workers;
- effectively implement the decision of the Constitutional Court on the decriminalization of abortion.

We again remind you that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

Copies: Women's Link Worldwide ~ via US mail
 Gabriel Silva Luján, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643
 P. Michael McKinley, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.275.4600
 Terry Steers-Gonzalez, Senior Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173
 José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992
 US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
 US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA 133/12_Colombia

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