

via fax: 011 57 1 337 58 90/ 342 05 92 Señor Presidente Alvaro Uribe Velez President of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 266 03 51 Señor Camilo Ospina Defense Minister of Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 Dr. Mario German Iguaran Attorney General of Colombia	

March 13, 2006

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are deeply concerned about the murder of **Alirio Sepulveda Jaimes**, a community leader in the municipality of Saraveña, Arauca Department, on February 4. He was shot just a block from an outpost of the National Police.

According to the Departmental Association of Campesinos (ADUC), witnesses recognized members of the National Army's S2 military intelligence unit (dressed in civilian clothing) picking up Sepulveda. Sepulveda was then murdered by hired killer Edgar Guiza Gamboa.

Guiza, who claims to be commander of the Saraveña paramilitaries, collaborates with the National Army's Mechanized Cavalry Group No. 18. This unit is commanded by Lt. Col. Carlos Vicente Prada Garces, who is listed as a graduate of the US Army's School of the Americas.

On November 12, 2002, Sepulveda had been detained, along with 42 other Arauca community leaders, based on allegations by former rebels who were allowed to demobilize if they accused others. Sepulveda was freed for lack of evidence, but he continued to suffer constant threats and harassment. The army claimed he was a member of the National Liberation Army (ELN).

As a result of our deep concern over the murder of Alirio Sepulveda Jaimes and for the safety of other members of the Arauca community we strongly urge you to:

- Immediately conduct a full and impartial investigation into the murder of Alirio Sepulveda Jaimes, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice, including Edgar Guiza Gamboa;
- Conduct a full and impartial investigation into links between the security forces and paramilitary groups in the municipality of Saravena
- Immediately act to dismantle paramilitary groups, in line with stated government commitments and recommendations made by the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

cc: **Andres Pastrana**, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax
William B Wood US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax
Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax
Dr. Francisco Santos, Vice-President of Colombia ~ via fax
Dr. Michael Frulin, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Colombia office ~ via fax
Dra. Maria Carolina Barco Isakson, Minister of Foreign Affairs ~ via fax
 US Senators **DeWine & Voinovich** ~ via email
 US Representatives **Brown, Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones** ~ via email

2006/03/03-Arauca-Colombia

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