

via fax: 011 57 1 337 58 90/ 342 05 92 <b>Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez</b> President of the Republic of Colombia	via fax: 011 57 1 560 46 30 <b>Dr. Carlos Holguin Sardi</b> Minister of the Interior and Justice of Colombia
via fax: 011 57 1 570 2000 <b>Dr. Mario Germán Iguaran Arana</b> Attorney General of Colombia	

November 14, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the safety of members of the non-governmental human rights organization **Corporación Reiniciar** and those on whose behalf they work. When staff arrived at the office in Bogotá on November 6, they discovered a break-in and reported that locks had been forced on file cupboards and some of the desk drawers. Corporación Reiniciar has campaigned for justice for the families of over 3,000 members of the Patriotic Union (UP) who have been killed or subjected to enforced disappearance since the party was formed in 1985, mostly at the hands of the security forces and army-backed paramilitaries. Following the break-in, the staff found that a file about the enforced disappearance of a member of UP was missing. Members of the army have been linked to this particular case.

Also taken from the office were two mobile phones that had been provided by the government as a protection measure for the staff. The safe had also been opened and some money removed, although a considerable amount was left. The intruders left a piece of black ribbon in one of the cupboards they had forced open. Members of the organization fear that the ribbon was meant as a threat because of its symbolic association with death and mourning.

This break-in is similar to others that have occurred this year at other non-governmental human rights organizations, namely Fellowship of Reconciliation on June 2, Justapaz on June 14, and Corporación Jurídica Yira Castro on June 22, all of which we sent you letters about on June 14 and July 14.

Because of the continuing threats described above, we **again strongly urge** you to:

- take effective action, as deemed appropriate by the staff of Corporación Reiniciar themselves, to protect them so they may continue their legitimate and important work in the defense of human rights without fear of intimidation;
- order full and impartial investigations into the break-in of their office, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- produce policy and plans, in conjunction with human rights defenders, to guarantee their safety according to the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and make these plans public.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Coordinator

cc: Carolina Barco Iskson, Colombian Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202.232.8643  
 Ambassador William Brownfield, US Ambassador to Colombia ~ via fax: 011.571.315.2197  
 Heather Merritt, Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.4173  
 Paolo Carozza US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3992  
 US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 303/07/Colombia

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