

via fax: 011 57 1 5969 0631
Sr. Juan Manuel Santos
 President of Colombia

via fax: 011 57 1 266 1003
Sr. Rodrigo Rivera Salazar
 Minister of Defense, Colombia

May 2, 2011

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the killing on March 22 of **Bernardo Londoño**, a member of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Antioquia Department and continuing threats to the safety of the entire community, including **Jesús Emilio Tuberquia** and his family.

On March 14 two men had been looking for the legal representative of the Peace Community, **Jesús Emilio Tuberquia**, at his home in San Josecito. One of them was seen with members of the XVII Brigade of the Colombian Army in the area a few days later.

On March 22, two paramilitaries on a motorbike followed the car in which **Jesús Emilio Tuberquia** was traveling to the Peace Community but stayed away from the car when they realized he had international accompaniment. A few minutes later they killed **Bernardo Rios Londoño** when he came by on his bicycle after having met **Jesús Emilio** earlier that day.

On March 23, the 14th anniversary of the creation of the Peace Community, paramilitaries told a member of the community that they had planned with the security forces to "exterminate" the community. The killings would continue if the community did not leave.

On April 2, paramilitaries passing the Peace Community hamlet of Arenas Altas threatened and accused the members of being guerrillas. Community members reported that later in the day an armed forces' helicopter collected the bodies of paramilitaries killed the previous day in Arenas Altas after fighting between paramilitaries and guerrillas.

Since the Peace Community's formation on March 23, 1997, more than 170 of its members have been killed—the majority by paramilitaries with the support of the armed forces—or subjected to enforced disappearance, while others have been threatened or sexually assaulted.

Since 2002, we have faxed at least 17 letters to Colombian government officials regarding intimidation, harassment, threats and assassinations of residents of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó (1 in 2002, 3 in 2003, 2 in 2004, 3 in 2005, 2 in 2006, 2 in 2007, 2 in 2008, 1 in 2009, and 1 in 2010).

Again, we **strongly urge you to**:

- ✓ order full and impartial investigations into the killing of **Bernardo Rios Londoño** and **ALL** threats against members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó (including **Jesús Emilio Tuberquia**), publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- ✓ take immediate action 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: Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó.. ~ 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: 011.571.315.2197
 Terry Steers-Gonzalez, Senior Desk Officer for Colombia, US State Department ~ via fax: 202.647.2628
 Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3650
 Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Colombia member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202.458.3650
 US Senators Brown and Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

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