

via fax: 011 57 1 596 0631  
**Exmo. Sr. Juan Manuel Santos**  
President of Colombia

via fax: 011 57 1 381 4747  
**Estimado Sr. Eduardo Montealegre**  
Attorney General of Colombia

December 12, 2012

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are outraged and strongly condemn the latest injustice to **David Rabelo Crespo**, human rights defender and Secretary-General of the Regional Corporation for the Defense of Human Rights (CREDHOS), who was sentenced on December 7 to 18 years and 3 months imprisonment on charges of aggravated homicide.

David Rabelo Crespo has been in La Picota prison in Bogotá since his arrest on September 14, 2010 in Barrancabermeja, Santander Department, for the 1991 killing of David Nuñez Cala, a local town official. The trial hearings, which ended on May 18, 2012, were marked by numerous irregularities on the part of the prosecution, including:

- the revelation, on November 22, 2012, that the main prosecutor in the trial had been forced to resign from a previous post as a police officer because of his involvement in the enforced disappearance of a young man in 1991. Under Colombian law this automatically disqualifies a person from the exercise of any future employment in the prosecution service;
- contradictory and false testimonies by prosecution witnesses;
- a defense witness's testimony about attempted bribery by prosecution witnesses to support the accusations against David Rabelo Crespo.

Since the investigation against him began in 2008, David Rabelo Crespo has been targeted by ongoing threats against him and his family (cf our letter of April 5, 2012). A defamatory pamphlet published on October 30, signed by a suspected paramilitary group, falsely accuses him and CREDHOS of having ties with illegal armed groups. This is a standard tactic of paramilitary groups used against human rights defenders in Colombia.

Because of the trial irregularities and our firm conviction that he was sentenced solely for his peaceful and legitimate human rights activities, we **strongly urge** that you:

- reverse David Rabelo Crespo's verdict;
- ensure that David Rabelo Crespo's treatment while in detention adheres to all conditions of the UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment;
- investigate the appointment of David Rabelo's public prosecutor, William Galdardo Pacheco Granados, in violation of Colombian law (Article 76, Decree number 261/2000).

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Coordinator

CC: 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  
Mary Brett Rogers-Springs, 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

Frontline Defenders 12/7/12\_Colombia

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