

USW Local 8751 - District 4

Boston School Bus Drivers' Union
25 Colgate Rd. • Roslindale, MA 02131
Telephone (617) 524-7073 Fax (617) 524-1691
www.BostonSchoolBusUnion.org



Friday, August 25, 2006

To Dr. Alvaro Uribe Velez, Presidencia de la República Fax: (+57 1) 566.20.71

E-mail: auribe@presidencia.gov.co

We, the undersigned labor representatives in the United Sates of America and supporters, are deeply concerned about the welfare of the members and the very existence of the Colombian Union SINALTRAINAL.

How much longer will Colombia hold the dishonorable and despicable title of being the deadliest country on earth for union leaders? How much longer will the families of union leaders in Colombia have to survive amid death threats to their loved ones for the sole reason of defending worker's rights?

In the latest in a series of assassinations of members of this union, on August 17, SINALTRAINAL member Carlos Arturo Montes Bonilla was viciously murdered near his home in Barrancabermeja. Montes Bonilla leaves behind a wife and seven children. He had worked in the Infants Club for the workers of the state oil corporation ECOPETROL and participated in numerous protests against the COCA COLA Company in its attempt to destroy the union by blocking the right of association.

This murder was carried out two weeks after the Bogota headquarters of SINALTRAINAL were raid without a legal warrant by uniformed men who identified themselves as members of SIJIN, the Judicial Police with the justification of being a "preventive operation" prior the inauguration on August 7th of your presidency. To circumvent the need for a warrant, the raid was classified as an "act of voluntary search".

Respectfully,

Frantz Mendes, President USW Local 8751 Boston School Bus Drivers Steve Gillis, Vice-President USW Local 8751 Boston School Bus Drivers

Then on August 18th, hardly a day after the murder of Montes Bonilla, a sympathy card signed "Death to Trade Unionists/ Muerte a Sindicalistas" was left in the home of Hector Jairo Paz, a SINALTRAINAL leader in Bugalagrande who works for NESTLE DE COLOMBIA, S.A. Ten days before, another union member was threatened while peacefully protesting in front of the NESTLE plant against the unjustified firing of 90 temporary workers and 4 workers with indefinite contracts affiliated to SINALTRAINAL.

We stand in complete solidarity with our Colombian union brothers and sisters and in particularly with the members of SINALTRAINAL who are the victim of a concerted effort to annihilate the union. From the United States, as we repeat the labor pronouncement of "an injury to one is an injury to all" we demand that: The Colombian government and the corporations involved stop at once the threats and assassination of union members; The immediate cessation of the so-called "voluntary searches" and The punishment of all the parties responsible for the threats and assassination.

As Labor Day approaches in the United States, a day when most major cities in the U.S. have large workers' gatherings, we will make sure that the issue of SINALTRAINAL and in general the attack on workers' rights in Colombia is prominent.

Chris Silvera, Chair National Teamsters Black Caucus Sec/Treas. Teamsters Local 808

Unity! Unidad!



Inité! Unidade!

Clarence Thomas, Past Secretary-Treasurer,

Local 10, International Longshore Workers Union; National Co-Chair, Million Worker March Movement

Felipe C. Teixeira

Most Reverend OFSJC Bishop Northeastern Diocese St Francis of Assisi, CCA

Dorothea Manuela, Co-Chair

Boston Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee

Kathy Black, President

Coalition of Labor Union Women, Philadelphia Chapter

Alejandro Murrieta Ahumada

Former President Utility Workers of America Union, L132

Michael Ruscigno, Business Agent

Teamsters Local 802 (union listed for identification purposes only)

Thomas Paine Cronin, President

AFSCME DC 47 Philadelphia, PA

Teresa Gutierrez, Co-Director

International Action Center

Patricia Hilliard, co-chair NJ-NWU UAW Local 1981

Susan E. Davis, Delegate National Writers Union UAW Local 1981

Send copies to:

Vicepresidencia de la República

Dr. Francisco Santos fsantos@presidencia.gov.co

Procuraduría General

Dr. Edgardo José Maya Villazón Fax: (+57 1)342.97.23 reygon@procuraduria.gov.co; anticorrupcion@presidencia.gov.co

Defensoría del Pueblo

Dr. Volmar Antonio Pérez Ortiz. Fax: (+571) 640 04 91 secretaria_privada@hotmail.com

Dr. Diego Palacios Betancourt Ministro de la Protección Social

Fax: 57 1 336 0182

Hdpalacio@minproteccionsocial.gov.coH

Dr. Carlos Franco

Programa de Derechos Humanos de Vicepresidencia

cefranco@prsidencia.gov.co, fibarra@presidencia.gov.co

Dr. Michael Frühling

Oficina del Alto Comisionado de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos.

Fax: 57 1 6293637 oacnudh@hcrh.org.co

JUAN CARLOS MARROQUIN

President Nestlé Bolivarian Region

juancarlos.marroquin@co.nestle.com

US EMBASSY

Hambassadorb@state.govH

SWISS EMBASSY

Hlea.valaulta@eda.admin.chH

With copies to: SINALTRAINAL

Hsinaltrainal@sinaltrainal.orgH Hareainternacional@sinaltrainal.orgH

For more information contact:

Philadelphia International Action Center 813 South 48th Street Philadelphia, PA 19143 215-724-1618 Email: phillyIAC@action-mail.org www.IACenter.org