

June 29, 2011

VIA FAX

United States Senate
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of the 1.2 million active and retired members of the United Steelworkers (USW), I write to provide important information concerning the continuing killings of trade unionists and other civil activist in Colombia.

As the ITUC concluded in its most recent, 2011 world survey of anti-union violence, Colombia continues *“to maintain the lead in a grim record of murder and repression of workers involved in trade union activities.”* Colombia should not be rewarded with a trade agreement until it develops a proven track record of bringing to justice those who have perpetrated crimes against union activists and has adopted and enforced workers’ rights throughout the country. **In recent weeks, -- since the Action Plan was announced between our two countries in April – violence against union activists and worker repression has continued unabated. As the information below shows the killings of trade unionists in Colombia in 2011 has accelerated to a rate of approximately one unionist every seven days during May and June.** Meanwhile, as the attached document authored by *Justice for Colombia* details, scores of civil society activists have been killed in the first 10 months of President Manuel Santos’s administration.

Colombian Unionists Killed So Far This Year According to the ENS

1. **Alejandro José PeñataLópez**, teacher and member of the Asociación de Maestros de Córdoba – ADEMACOR (teachers’ association of Córdoba), affiliated to the CUT, was murdered on June 20. After he disappeared after leaving school, his body was found with signs of torture. He had been hanged with barbed wire.
2. **Margarita de las Salas Bacca** (pictured left), judge on the Sixth Circuit Labor Court and member of the Asonal Judicial union, was killed in Barranquilla on June 9, 2011, after leaving the courthouse. She was survived by her husband and daughter.





Funeral Procession for Margarita de las Salas

3. **Jorge Eliecer de los Rios** (pictured left), teacher, environmental campaigner, and member of the Ser union, killed June 8, 2011 in Pereira, Risaralda department. He was shot several times from a motorbike while on his school's campus. A leading member of the Meedrua non-governmental organization, he had led a campaign to expose the damage wreaked by an open air mine belonging to multinationals.



4. **Carlos Julio Gómez**, teacher and member of the Sutev union, shot and killed May 29, 2011 in Cali, Valle department.
5. **Freddy Antonio Cuadrado Nuñez**, teacher and member of the Edumagunion, killed May 27, 2011 in Ciénaga, Magdalena department. He was shot in the head and killed as he celebrated his 46th birthday.

6. **Carlos Arturo Castro Casas** (pictured left), 41, engineer, member of the Sintraemcali union, and father of three, shot in the neck by two armed men and killed May 23, 2011 in Cali, Valle department.

7. **Juan Carlos Chagüi Cueter**, prison guard and member of the Sigginpec union, killed May 15, 2011 in Barranquilla, Atlántico department.

8. **Dionis Alfredo Sierra Vergara** (pictured left), elementary school teacher and member of the Ademacor union, killed May 15, 2011 in La Apartada, Córdoba department.

9. **Luci Ricardo Florez**, 28, teacher and member of the Ademacor union, shot by armed men on motorbikes and killed May 3, 2011 in Ayapel, Córdoba department as she was walking home with her mother.

10. **Antonio Ramiro Muñoz Sánchez**, member of the Asotmem union, killed April 8, 2011 in Puerto Boyacá, Boyacá department. According to witnesses, he was shot repeatedly by two men riding a motorbike as he was leaving a union meeting. According to Justice for Colombia, the union had been organizing workers and the local community to demand that oil companies hire local labor.



11. **Héctor Orozco**, 35, father of three and Vice-President of the Astracatol union, killed March 30, 2011 in Chaparral, Tolima department. In the days before he died, Orozco had reported to the local office of the Reiniciar human rights non-governmental organization that he and several other persons had been threatened by an army officer named John Jairo Velez.



12. **HernánYesid Pinto Rincón** (pictured left), member of the CGT union and Founder and member of the national board of the new farmers' organization, killed March 19, 2011 in Tibacuy, Cundinamarca department. Before his death, he had taken the lead in the struggle of farm workers.

13. **Carlos Alberto Ayala Moreno**, member of the Asepunion and Director of the Caucasia Rural Education Institute, killed February 5, 2011 in Puerto Asís, Putumayo department. He was shot and killed by gunmen as he left his home.

14. **Humberto de Jesús Espinoza Díaz**, teacher in the Mistrato Agricultural Institute and member of the Ser union, shot and killed by armed men in January 30, 2011 in Mistrató, Risaralda department.

15. **Jairo Enrique Veloza Martínez**, 35, member of the Sigginpec union, shot three times in the head by gunman and killed January 27, 2011 in Bogotá, Cundinamarca department.



16. **Silverio Antonio Sanchez** (pictured left), 37, member of the union Ser, killed on January 24, 2011, from an intentional explosion which caused burns to 80% of his body on December of 2010.

17. **Manuel Esteban Tejada**, teacher and member of the Ademacor union, shot and killed in his home by armed men on January 10, 2011 in Planeta Rica, Córdoba department.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Leo W. Gerard
International President

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

PRESIDENT SANTOS – THE FIRST 10 MONTHS

- In his August 7th 2010 inauguration speech Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos promised that his Government would have “a firm and unwavering commitment” to human rights and stated that “respect for life is a sacred principle”. **Since then Colombia’s reality has not matched the rhetoric.**
- Trade unionists, human rights defenders, opposition politicians, community and indigenous leaders continue to be assassinated; their voices silenced. **On average, one person is being assassinated every three days.**
 - Children also continue to be brutally murdered by the Colombian Army.
 - Despite a massive public relations effort by the regime, **impunity continues to reign.**
 - Hundreds of other civil society activists have been the victims of death threats, torture, exile, forced disappearance, displacement, or imprisonment without trial.

End the Killings – End the Impunity

No Free Trade Agreements with Colombia



www.justiceforcolombia.org

ASSASSINATIONS DURING THE FIRST TEN MONTHS OF THE PRESIDENT SANTOS ADMINISTRATION IN COLOMBIA

Several of the victims below, including all but one of the children listed, were killed by the Colombian security forces. Most of the others were killed by paramilitaries with well documented links to state security forces.

No.	Date	Name	Details	Location
1	09.08.2010	Luz Emilia Carreno Barrera	Community leader who worked with children.	Bogota
2	12.08.2010	Luis German Restrepo	Leader of the SINTRAEMPAQUES trade union.	Medellin, Antioquia
3	12.08.2010	Alvaro Montoya	Community leader and peace activist.	San Jose de Apartado
4	13.08.2010	Jineth Alexandra Barrios Duque	Community leader.	Bogota
5	13.08.2010	Carmen Elisa Mora	Indigenous leader, assassinated whilst pregnant.	Saravena, Arauca
6	13.08.2010	Norma Irene Perez	President of a local human rights commission.	La Macarena
7	14.08.2010	Jaime Reyes Sampier	Indigenous leader.	Tame, Arauca
8	15.08.2010	Luis Esteban Campo Rolon	16 year-old youth shot by army troops.	El Tarra, Norte de Santander
9	16.08.2010	Freddy Esteban Bermudez Claro	Community leader.	Cucuta, Norte de Santander
10	19.08.2010	Belo Ufo Pineda	Human rights worker, leader of an association of displaced people.	Popayan, Cauca
11	26.08.2010	Maria Elena Murillo Caicedo	Community leader and human rights activist.	Medellin, Antioquia
12	26.08.2010	Janet Carmenza Amaya	Community leader and human rights activist.	Medellin, Antioquia
13	26.08.2010	Humberto de Jesus Tobon Rivera	Activist in the ADIDA trade union.	Medellin, Antioquia
14	27.08.2010	Nevis Yuleny Roldan Sanchez	LGBT rights activist.	Yarumal, Antioquia
15	27.08.2010	Cruz Elena Rojo Pena	LGBT rights activist.	Yarumal, Antioquia
16	28.08.2010	Aldemar Medina Bonilla	President of a neighbourhood association.	Neiva, Huila
17	29.08.2010	Richard Alexander Martinez	Indigenous leader.	Miranda, Cauca
18	02.09.2010	Gustavo Jaramillo	Community leader.	Medellin, Antioquia
19	03.09.2010	Juan Carlos Burgos	Activist in the Democratic Pole opposition party.	Pasto, Narino
20	04.09.2010	Pedro Elias Ballesteros Rojas	Activist in the ASONAL JUDICIAL trade union.	Cucuta, Norte de Santander
21	06.09.2010	Robinson Rivera Higueta	Activist in the ADIDA trade union and former councillor.	Peque, Antioquia
22	09.09.2010	Segundo Salvador Forero Moreno	Activist in the EDUCAL trade union.	Anserma, Caldas
23	09.09.2010	Nelson Murillo Taborda	Activist in the SINTRAGRIM trade union and community leader.	El Castillo, Meta
24	10.09.2010	Luis Fernando Hoyos Arteaga	Activist in the ADEMADOR trade union.	Monteria, Cordoba
25	11.09.2010	Elkin de Angel Williams	Journalist and candidate for local councillor. Was threatened by police, who accused him of being a terrorist.	Puerto Asis, Putumayo
26	12.09.2010	Alvaro Valencia	San Jose Peace Community member.	San Jose de Apartado, Antioquia
27	12.09.2010	Victoria Eugenia Mosquera	Community leader.	El Tambo, Cauca
28	15.09.2010	Freddy Velez Guillen	Community leader.	Cerete, Cordoba
29	19.09.2010	Hernando Perez	Leader of an organisation representing victims of human rights abuses.	Necocli, Antioquia
30	19.09.2010	Carlos Augusto Esguerra Escudero	Activist campaigning for stolen land to be returned to displaced people.	Barrancabermeja, Santander
31	26.09.2010	Edgar Bohorquez Palma	Leader of an association of displaced people.	Saravena, Arauca
32	28.09.2010	Ramiro Inampues	Former indigenous Governor.	Guachuca, Narino
33	28.09.2010	Carlos Roberto Hoyos Puerta	Community leader.	Chigorodo, Antioquia
34	28.09.2010	Maria Elena Galindez	Indigenous leader.	Guachuca, Narino
35	30.09.2010	David Enrique Creo	Community leader.	El Charco, Narino
36	09.10.2010	Isaias Montes	Indigenous leader.	Iroka, Cesar
37	11.10.2010	Ana Maria Moreno	Legal Representative of the Asti Afro-Colombian Community.	Acandi, Choco
38	14.10.2010	William Francisco Cuervo Romero	17 year-old youth shot by police.	Cucuta, Norte de Santander
39	14.10.2010	Yenni Torres Jaimes	14 years old, raped tortured and murdered by soldiers, her brothers who witnessed the rape were also tortured and murdered before all three were dumped in a shallow grave.	Tame, Arauca
40	14.10.2010	Jimmy Ferney Torres Jaimes	9 years old, brother of Jenny Narvaez.	Tame, Arauca
41	14.10.2010	Jeferson Giovanni Torres Jaimes	6 years old, brother of Jenny Narvaez.	Tame, Arauca
42	14.10.2010	Rodolfo Maya Aricape	Indigenous community leader.	Caloto, Cauca
43	25.10.2010	Juan Carlos Arredondo	Founding member of the Democratic Pole opposition party.	Manaua, La Guajira
44	28.10.2010	William Tafur	Activist in the SINTRAMIENERGETICA trade union.	Santa Marta, Magdalena
45	30.10.2010	Omaira Tamayo Montano	Activist in the EDUMAG trade union.	Sitio Nuevo, Magdalena
46	30.10.2010	Freddy Naranjo Bayona	Community leader.	Aguachica, Cesar
47	30.10.2010	Elizabeth Silva Aguilar	Activist in the Democratic Pole and community leader.	Bucaramanga, Santander
48	02.11.2010	Mayra Almeida Morantes	Young woman disappeared by men in DAS police uniforms. Body later found in mass grave.	Cucuta, Norte de Santander
49	04.11.2010	Carlos Hernando Castillo Calvache	Activist in the ASEINPEC trade union.	Mocoa, Putumayo
50	04.11.2010	Luis Alfredo Garcia Bisbicus	Awa indigenous leader.	Barbacenas, Narino
51	05.11.2010	David Ariosto Ballen Garcia	Former member of DAS, prime witness in wiretap case against the DAS.	Medellin, Antioquia
52	05.11.2010	Juan Manuel Jimenez Arrieta	President of a neighbourhood association	Monteria, Cordoba
53	05.11.2010	Geider Dionicio Mendoza Valencia	3 year-old child shot by army.	San Vicente del Caguan, Caqueta

No.	Date	Name	Details	Location
54	06.11.2010	Ligia Gonzalez	Activist in the SUTEV-FECODE trade union.	Tulua, Valle
55	14.11.2010	Yurgen Pailares Castilla	Farmers' leader and mayoral candidate.	Convencion, Norte de Santander
56	14.11.2010	Thomas Aquino Buelvas	Activist in the ADEMADOR trade union.	Montelibano, Cordoba
57	16.11.2010	Milner Avedaño Peñaranda	Activist in the Democratic Pole opposition party.	El Tarra, Norte de Santander
58	16.11.2010	Diego Leonardo Vanegas Gonzalez	Activist in the ADIDA trade union.	Medellin, Antioquia
59	20.11.2010	Hernando Bula Nevis	Activist in the ADEMADOR trade union.	Sahagun, Cordoba
60	21.11.2010	Numidia Arroyo	Mother of main witness in case against ex-President of Congress for paramilitary links. Tied to a tree and shot 27 times.	Planadas, Tolima
61	23.11.2010	Alberto de Jesus Serna Montoya	Community leader.	Guadalajara de Buga, Valle
62	24.11.2010	Oscar Maussa	Leader of an organisation of displaced peasant farmers.	San Juan Nepomuceno, Bolivar
63	05.12.2010	Jose Luis Montemiranda Rodriguez	Activist in the SINCONTAXCAR trade union.	Cartagena, Bolivar
64	06.12.2010	Jose Leandro Guelto	Indigenous leader.	Suarez, Cauca
65	06.12.2010	Ariel de Jesus Benitez Hernandez	Activist in the ADIDA trade union.	Yarumal, Antioquia
66	11.12.2010	Wilson Albeiro Erazo Ascutar	Activist in the SINALTIRAINAL trade union.	Palмира, Valle
67	13.12.2010	Yelfer Hoyos Cordoba	17 year-old shot by police.	Popayan, Cauca
68	13.12.2010	Alberto Hernandez	Activist in the SIDEMS trade union.	Saravena, Arauca
69	13.12.2010	Yersen Hoyos Cordoba	17 year-old youth shot by police.	Popayan, Cauca
70	20.12.2010	Eduar Andres Paz	Teenager, shot by police.	Argelia, Cauca
71	31.12.2010	Jose Lenin Mayuza	Leading activist in the Democratic Pole opposition party.	La Union, Valle
72	10.01.2011	Manuel Esteban Tejada	Activist in the ADEMADOR trade union.	Planeta Rica, Cordoba
73	27.01.2011	Jairo Enrique Veloza Martinez	Activist in the SIGGINPEC trade union.	Bogota
74	30.01.2011	Fernan Lopez Rivera	Leader of Ayapel Miners' Association.	Ayapel, Cordoba
75	30.01.2011	Humberto de Jesus Espinoza Diaz	Activist in the SER trade union.	Pereira, Risaralda
76	05.02.2011	Carlos Ayala	Activist in the ASEP trade union.	Puerto Asis, Putumayo
77	11.02.2011	Luz Mery Roa Roa	Vice-president of the "Dios Peña" neighbourhood association. Killed alongside her mother, two farm workers, and her 5 year-old daughter, who was dismembered.	San Miguel, Putumayo
78	17.02.2011	Sandra Viviana Cuellar Gallego	Disappeared environmental activist, presumed dead.	Cali, Valle
79	28.02.2011	Crisanto Tequia Queragama	Disappeared on the 28th of February. Body found four days later with a bullet impact in the head. Embera indigenous person.	Bajo Baudo, Choco
80	06.03.2011	Leopoldina Valencia Lemos	Elderly indigenous lady of the Kwet Waia Community.	Pradera, Valle
81	07.03.2011	Juan Reales	San Jose Peace Community member.	San Jose de Apartado, Antioquia
82	15.03.2011	Jose Rojas Largo	Young peasant farmer shot and killed by army.	Paya, Boyaca
83	17.03.2011	Gabriela John Edison Ramirez Salazar	19 year old transsexual, LGBT and human rights activist.	Pasto, Narino
84	19.03.2011	Hernan Yesid Pinto	National Committee Member CGT trade union confederation.	Tibacuy, Cundinamarca
85	22.03.2011	Bernardo Rios Londoño	Farmer and former member of the peace community of San José de Apartado.	San Jose de Apartado, Antioquia
86	22.03.2011	Gloria Constanza Gaona Rodriguez	Judge in charge of cases against soldiers responsible for rape, torture and killing of the three Torres children in Arauca and in the rape of a 5 year old by troops of the Army's 5th Mobile Brigade.	Saravena, Arauca
87	23.03.2011	Eder Verbel Rocha	Activist in MOVICE – the National Movement of Victims.	San Onofre, Sucre
88	30.03.2011	Hector Orozco	Activist in the ASTRACATOL/FENSUAGRO trade union.	La Marina, Tolima
89	30.03.2011	Gildardo Garcia	Activist in the ASTRACATOL/FENSUAGRO trade union.	La Marina, Tolima
90	07.04.2011	Andres Alvarez Orozco	Leader of a neighbourhood association.	El Carmen, Antioquia
91	08.04.2011	Ramiro Sanchez	Activist in the ASOGREN trade union.	Puerto Boyaca, Boyaca
92	03.05.2011	Ricardo Luci Florez	Activist in the ADEMADOR trade union.	Ayapel, Cordoba
93	14.05.2011	Argemiro Hernandez	Activist in the Democratic Pole opposition party.	Chaparral, Tolima
94	15.05.2011	Jhony Alfredo Sierra Vergara	Activist in the ADEMADOR trade union.	La Apartada, Cordoba
95	15.05.2011	Juan Carlos Chagui Cueter	Activist in the SIGGINPEC trade union.	Barranquilla, Atlantico
96	23.05.2011	Carlos Arturo Castro Casas	Activist in the SINTRAEMCALI trade union.	Cali, Valle
97	26.05.2011	Carlos Julio Gomez	Activist in the SUTEV trade union.	Cali, Valle
98	27.05.2011	Freddy Antonio Cuadrado Nunez	Activist in the EDUMAG trade union.	Ciénaga, Magdalena
99	31.05.2011	Pedro Martinez Arevalo	President of a neighbourhood association.	Bogota
100	01.06.2011	Fanny Francisca del Castillo Ortega	President of a neighbourhood association.	Arauca, Arauca
101	02.06.2011	Hernan Dario Escobar	Labour lawyer for the SINTRAEMCALI trade union.	Cali, Valle
102	05.06.2011	Walis Fredh Barreto	Peasant farmer and activist.	Tame, Arauca
103	08.06.2011	Jorge Eliceer de los Rios	Activist in the SER trade union.	Pereira, Risaralda
104	09.06.2011	Margarita de las Salas Bacca	Activist in the ASONAL JUDICIAL trade union.	Barranquilla, Atlantico

The international community must send a strong message to the Colombian regime

End the Killings – End the Impunity No Free Trade Agreements with Colombia