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A Plan Colombia for Victims:

How you can support truth, justice, reparation and PEACE in Colombia

Impacts of U.S. Policy in Colombia

In 2000, the first *Plan Colombia* was presented to the US Congress as a six-year plan to improve human rights, support the rule of law, promote a peaceful end to the country's conflict, and reduce coca cultivation in Colombia through aerial fumigations. Since then, roughly 80% of US funding has gone to Colombia's military and police forces. Although over \$5 billion of U.S. tax payers' money has been spent over the last six years, Colombia's conflict rages on: the number of internally displaced persons has grown to well over 3 million, two guerrilla groups remain active, and despite the recent paramilitary demobilization, these groups still operate in 23 of Colombia's 32 provinces. And according to U.S. government figures, more coca was grown in Colombia in 2005 than when the fumigations program began.

Between July 2002 and June 2006 a total of 11,292 persons were registered as assassinated or disappeared; responsibility for this violence has been attributed to paramilitaries in 61% of cases, to guerrilla groups in 25% and to the government in 14% of cases. Moreover, collaboration between members of the army and paramilitary forces continues to be a serious problem. All evidence shows that U.S. funding under the original Plan Colombia has done little to support human rights, increase the rule of law or contribute to peace in Colombia.

Colombians ask that we support a *Plan Colombia for Victims!*

Progress toward peace, the rule of law, and an end to the illegal drug trade in Colombia requires that an effective justice system, true civilian governance, and sustainable economic development alternatives be established.

The millions of civilians who have suffered systematic violence in Colombia urgently call for our support in helping them take on the monumental task of seeking truth, justice and reparations.

Victims' perspectives and participation are crucial to constructing sustainable peace in Colombia. A *Plan Colombia for Victims* would focus on bringing war criminals to justice, supporting reparation and justice for the nation's millions of victims, decreasing violent conflict and strengthening the rule of law. It would provide humanitarian assistance for Colombia's over 3 million internally displaced. It would ensure that victims of paramilitary violence in Colombia have adequate legal representation and that they are protected from threats being made to silence their testimony. It would allow for full and impartial investigation of crimes committed by paramilitary groups and of the links these groups have/had with the military and with high-level politicians. It is time to support the rights of victims by shifting U.S. support in Colombia away from war and toward peace!

Take Action!

Tell your congressional representatives to:

- ***Establish a more humane and effective aid package to Colombia with 80% of U.S. funds supporting the rights of victims and economic development.***
- ***Ensure that 2008 U.S. funding for Colombia increases protection and humanitarian aid for internally displaced persons, victim's advocates, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities and for strengthening the justice system.***
- ***Advocate for assistance that ensures adequate security for witnesses, victims, judges and prosecutors; equips Colombians with technology needed to guarantee justice, including forensic labs to identify victim's bodies and technology to track illegal land claims and assets of armed groups; and trains and employs many more competent lawyers to ensure that millions of victims have access quality legal representation.***

Funding to support victims could easily be moved from these budget categories:

\$211.7 million for aircraft maintenance could be cut because the Colombian government has long promised to assume these costs; \$81.7 million for aerial drug crop fumigation could be cut because it is an inhumane and failed strategy; or \$89.1 million for foreign military financing could be cut. A number of Colombian military units have horrible human rights records.

To reach your member of Congress call: (202) 224-3121