

S.E. Álvaro Uribe Vélez Secretaría de Gobernación
Presidente de la República,
Carrera 8 # 7-26
Palacio de Nariño
Santa Fe de Bogotá.
Colombia



London, 21 July 2010

Dear President Uribe

RE: Luis Guillermo Pérez Casas

I am writing on behalf of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRC). The BHRC is the international human rights arm of the Bar of England and Wales. It is an independent body concerned with defending the rule of law and internationally recognised legal standards relating to human rights and the right to fair trial.

The BHRC is contacting to express its concerns regarding the safety and privacy of Luis Guillermo Pérez Casas, lawyer and member of the “José Alvear Restrepo” Lawyers’ Collective (“CCAJAR”), who will return to Colombia on 30 July following 10 years in exile to continue his work as a human rights lawyer.

Prior to his return, BHRC has been informed that, in October 2009, shortly before he was due to attend an appointment at the International Criminal Court in the Hague, Sñr Pérez’s home in Belgium was the subject of a burglary in which only his computers and digital memory devices were stolen.

The BHRC has further been informed that on the 22nd April of this year at about 1400 hours, a call was received the house of Sñr Pérez’s mother asking after his son, who has already been the subject of threats in his childhood. The call, which was said to be from Colombia, made reference to the departure of President Uribe from government and promised that Sñr Pérez’s son would hear further from the caller.

We also understand that Sñr Pérez has also been described by the Colombian press as a part of the diplomatic “wing” of the FARC, information which clearly renders him a target for reprisals.

In light of the above, the BHRC is concerned for his safety and ability to work unmolested. In this regard, the BHRC would draw your attention to Article 16 of the UN Basic Principles of the Role of Lawyers (1990) which states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with,

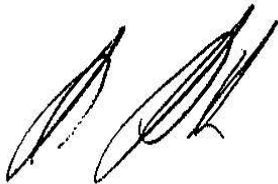
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prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

You will also be aware that a number of members of CCAJAR are the beneficiaries of provisional measures granted by the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, making the Colombian state responsible for the guarantee of their safety.

The BHRC therefore respectfully urges the Colombian authorities to take immediate and effective steps to protect and ensure the safety of Luis Guillermo Pérez Casas, and in general all threatened lawyers, in order to preserve the independence and integrity of the administration of justice.

Yours sincerely



Mark Muller QC
Chairman
Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales

Copies sent to:

- Francisco Santos, Vicepresidente de la República
- Fabio Valencia Cossio, Ministro del Interior y de Justicia
- Alejandro Ordoñez Maldonado, Procurador General de la Nación
- Guillermo Mendoza Diago, Fiscal General de la República de Colombia
- Marucio Rodríguez Múnera, Colombian Ambassador to the UK
- John Dew, UK Ambassador to Colombia