

Álvaro Uribe Vélez
President, Republic of Colombia

Dear Mr. President:

The National Lawyers Guild is an association representing labor and human rights lawyers in the United States. It is with profound sadness and outrage that we learned of the assassination of yet another Columbian labor leader, Luciano Enrique Romero Molina, a former Nestlé employee and leader of the foodworkers' union, SINALTRAINAL. We are outraged, among other reasons, because Mr. Romero was under the protection of the Human Rights Commission of the Organization of American States. From our perspective, it appears that a virtual war of annihilation is being waged against Colombian union members and officers, and that the government of Columbia is utterly failing to protect their basic human rights, or even their lives, while, at the same time, engaging in amnesty negotiations with the very paramilitary forces likely responsible for these barbaric acts.

This outrage was followed by the murder of defensor público Pedro Perez in Barranquilla, apparently by hired assassins. That lawyers defending social justice are subject to such attack is antithetical to a free society under the rule of law.

The Labor and International Committees of the National Lawyers Guild of the United States call upon your government to assure that a timely, thorough, and transparent investigation be conducted to identify, try and hold accountable the murderers responsible for these heinous crimes. Further, in the name of all civilized nations, we call upon you to uphold the human rights of labor leaders in Columbia and to take all necessary steps to protect their safety.

Labor Committee

International Committee

Letter will be in Spanish. Will also be sent to Vicepresidente Francisco Santos, Dr. Carlos Franco, Director del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y de Derecho Internacional Humanitario, Dr. Mario IguarAjn Arana, Fiscal General de la Nación, and the Interamerican Court for Human Rights