



BEYOND THE WALLS

(TRASPASA LOS MUROS)

PERMANENT CAMPAIGN IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE POLITICAL DETAINEES

(CAMPAÑA PERMANENTE DE SOLIDARIDAD CON LAS DETENIDAS Y LOS DETENIDOS POLÍTICOS)

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The Permanent Campaign in Solidarity with the Political Detainees transcribes and resends the following:

PUBLIC DENUNCIATION

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR OF COLOMBIA THREATENS THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WOMEN PRISONERS OF THE TRAMACUA PENITENTIARY OF VALLEDUPAR-COLOMBIA

From The Women Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War of the High Security Penitentiary of Valledupar-La Tramacua: Before the national and international community we denounce and reject the authoritarianism and abuse of power of the Colombian Senior Minister of the Interior, FABIO VALENCIA COSSIO, as a result of the following deeds:

On October 16, 2009, the Minister of the Interior, FABIO VALENCIA COSSIO, abusing his power threatened our Human Rights Representative. Watching her every move, he prohibited her from continuing to give declarations by phone and ordered a disciplinary process to be opened against her for denouncing over the radio the outrages and inhumane conditions in which we find ourselves, the 104 women detained in La Tramacua, and, equally, the failure to fulfill the promises made to improve our living conditions and to transfer defendants and medium security convicts to prisons near their families.

No less could be expected from an illegitimate and illegal government whose justice comes from a foundation of military intelligence set-ups and the bribery and buying of witnesses. Moreover, it is a government accused internationally of state crimes, false-positives¹, illegal wiretaps, the

stigmatization and the irresponsible targeting of human rights defenders and popular leaders.

The threatening watch of the Minister only shows that he fears that it might be made public that in Colombia there are special "Five Star" jails in which one finds inmates such as his brother, GUILLERMO LEÓN VALENCIA, accused of narcotrafficking and paramilitary activities, who, together with the government allies linked to the para-politicaⁱⁱ, enjoy privileges and comforts in special pavilions where they have access to cell phones, computers, the internet, visits at various times of the week, food service to the cells and even their own massage therapists. Meanwhile, we, the 104 women who are in La Tramacua, withstand extreme temperatures of 28 to 35 degrees Celsius (83 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit) without access to water and far from our families who cannot visit us due to the long distance and lack of resources. We are chained hand and foot even to go for an external medical review.

As political prisoners, we stand behind the denunciations and petitions of our Human Rights Representative to dignify our conditions of confinement and the exercise of the right of freedom of expression.

We make a call to national and international Human Rights organizations, to Colombianos y Colombianas por la Paz (Colombians for Peace), that they:

1. Reject the persecution that confronts the Human Rights Representatives in Colombian jails.
2. Verify the conditions in which we find ourselves, which we have denounced in previous opportunities.
3. Send their communications rejecting the reprisals and conditions to which we are submitted to the following Colombian authorities:

President of the Republic

ÁLVARO URIBE VÉLEZ. PALACIO DE NARIÑO

Carrera 8 No.7-2, Bogotá. Colombia

Fax: +57 1 337 5890 / 342 0592. E-mail: auribe@presidencia.gov.co

Presidential Program for Human and International Rights

Director Carlos Franco.

E-mail: cefranco@presidencia.gov.co.

Asesor Fernando Ibarra.

Tel.: +57.1.336.03.11, FAX: +57.1.337.46.67

E-mail: fiarra@presidencia.gov.co

National Court System

Diagonal 22B (Av. Luis Carlos Galán No. 52-01) Bloque C, Piso 4, Bogotá, Colombia.
Fax: + 57 1 570 2000 (extensión 2017).

E-mail: denuncias@fiscalia.gov.co y contacto@fiscalia.gov.co

National Attorney General

ALEJANDRO ORDÓÑEZ MALDONADO

Carrera 5 #. 15-80, Bogotá.

Fax: +57.1.342.97.23; +571.284.79.49. Fax: +57.1.342.97.23;

E-mail: cap@procuraduria.gov.co, quejas@procuraduria.gov.co; y
webmaster@procuraduria.gov.co

National Public Defender

VOLMAR ANTONIO PÉREZ ORTIZ

Calle 55 # 10-32, Bogotá

Fax: + 57.1.640.04.91

E-mail: secretaria_privada@hotmail.com; agenda@agenda.gov.co

**THE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR ARE NOT
CRIMINALS! WE SUPPORT THE HUMANITARIAN EXCHANGE OF
PRISONERS!!!**

POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR
PENITENTIARY OF VALLEDUPAR –CESAR “LA TRAMACUA”

Colombia, October 22, 2009

ⁱ “False positives” refers to the practice by members of the Colombian military of killing civilian young people, then dressing them to look like guerrillas killed in battle. Some 1,200 persons have been proven officially to have been executed as “false positives”. This scandal has reached to the highest levels of the Colombian military and at one point resulted in the dismissal of 30 military personnel, including the Commander of the Colombian Armed Forces.

ⁱⁱ The “para-politica” refers to the large number of elected officials allied with the administration of Pres. Álvaro Uribe who have been shown to be linked to narcotraffickers and paramilitaries. For instance, some 40% of Colombian Congresspersons have been arrested or are under investigation for such links.