

From Lilianny Obando
National Women's Penitentiary
Bogota, Colombia, November 17, 2008

To: Friends of the Campaign for Labor Rights,
Friends of the Colombia Action Network,
Activist Friends for Peace, Social Justice and the defense of Human Rights in the United States

May you all receive a fraternal greeting of solidarity on my behalf and from all the other political prisoners secluded in the jails of Colombia and the United States.

With much emotion and gratitude I received in the National Women's Penitentiary, where I have been a prisoner for 3 months, the messages of solidarity and I learned of your noble intention to undertake a campaign to pressure the Colombian government for my freedom. Comrades, your worry, your constant concern for the causes of Social Justice are the fuel that, in conditions like ours, the political prisoners, feeds our morale and fills our spirits so that we continue with our work, whose final goal is the construction of a better world, with fairness, without exclusion, with justice and peace.

Friends, if the campaign is to serve so as to continue with the denunciation of the social injustices that my people suffer, and to denounce the aberrant violations of workers' rights and other human rights against union members, campesinos, the indigenous, Afro-Colombian communities, students, social leaders, popular activists, human rights defenders, and the political opposition of my country, it would be welcome.

If the campaign is to serve to condemn the Colombian state for its systematic practice of "State Terror" against its people, and to reject the interference of the North American state with its military bases, with the training of military torturers and their death squads; with its military plans such as Plan Colombia, Plan Patriot and other Plans of interventionist war; and to reject its plans that strip the riches of our America and our Colombia through the "Free Trade Agreements", it would be welcome, friends.

With much honor I will be an instrument so that the world may know the reality of the more than 7,200 political prisoners in the Colombian jails and of the Colombian political prisoners extradited under rough conditions to the United States. And with all honor I will be an instrument by which the world learns of our fallen dead in this absurd Dirty War of the Colombian State. For our dead, not one minute of silence, but every minute a life of struggle!

If you friends lend us your free bodies and your voices so that ours may reach to thousands of "receptive ears", we, the political prisoners, will place our commitment, our courage, our restrained rage, to continuing the task for that Colombia and that Latin America and that better world. From here, we are already working hard to pressure the Colombian government that they open the doors to a true Humanitarian Exchange of Prisoners, and for this the pressure and international support are fundamental. And we likewise pledge to continue insisting on a negotiated political solution to the Internal Colombian Conflict. We are convinced that this is the only option to achieve a nation with at peace, with social justice.

Campaign for Labor Rights www.clrlabor.org Colombia Action Network www.colombiasolidarity.org