

RESOLUTION REGARDING COLOMBIAN POLITICAL PRISONER LILIANY PATRICIA OBANDO VILLOTA

We demand freedom for Lilianny Patricia Obando Villota, a Colombian trade unionist, filmmaker, and academic. Ms. Obando was arrested the very week the Colombian farm workers' union, FENSUAGRO, released her report about the more than 1,500 of their union members who have been murdered in anti-union attacks. She has been wrongfully imprisoned on the basis of emails allegedly contained in the computers belonging to FARC-EP leader Raúl Reyes, computers that miraculously survived the illegal bombing of Ecuadorian territory by the Colombian government, when they attacked a prisoner release negotiation camp on March 1st, 2008.

Even the international police organization, INTERPOL, said that they could not authenticate the sources of documents on the computers and that investigative procedures by Colombian authorities "did not conform to internationally recognized principles". Furthermore, on Dec. 1st, 2008, Colombian Police Captain and anti-terrorist investigator, Ronald Hayden Coy Ortiz, who examined the computers while they were in Colombian custody, declared under oath that the computers did not contain any emails, only Word documents. It is well known that Word documents can be easily manipulated without the source being traced. These computers were in the custody of the Colombian police for three days before being turned over to INTERPOL.

The government, through a process that has been named the "farc-politica", has repeatedly used the claim of email evidence from these computers to make allegations and to launch investigations against political opponents of the administration of Pres. Alvaro Uribe. Those targeted include independent journalists, unionists, and opposition Senators and Representatives in the National Assembly. Based on the testimony of Captain Coy that the computers contained no emails whatsoever; on the failure of INTERPOL to verify the authenticity of the computers and the documents contained therein; on the improper procedures of the Colombian authorities; and on the fact that the documents found are documents easily manipulated; it is obvious that these investigations are not legitimate, but represent an effort to widen the web of repression against dissent and free, democratic expression in Colombia.

Colombian President Uribe imprisons activists like Ms. Obando who demand fundamental change. Meanwhile death squads roam free terrorizing peasants and trade unionists, working hand in glove with the Colombian Military. The U.S. Government orchestrates this through Plan Colombia a \$6 billion plan for war and repression aimed against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). It also targets activists for social change who organize the Colombian people. A whole layer of Colombian Generals and Officers trained at the School of the Americas were recently fired for kidnapping homeless people and young unemployed men, murdering them and claiming them as FARC rebels.

We, therefore, demand:

- 1) The immediate release from prison of Lilianny Obando;
- 2) An end to the "farc-politica" process and to any and all investigations linked to the unreliable Reyes computers;
- 3) Good faith negotiations by the Colombian government for a Humanitarian Exchange of Prisoners and the release all political prisoners held in Colombian prisons;

We further demand, until the above conditions are met, that Ms. Obando, as a single mother and head of her household, be permitted her constitutional right to home imprisonment so that she can care for the needs of her two children.

Organizational Endorsers:

Alliance for Global Justice
Latin America Solidarity Coalition
Campaign for Labor Rights
Colombia Action Network
Interconnect
Interfaith Task Force on the Americas
El Salvador Sister Cities Project
Nicaragua Network
Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
Pan Left Video Collective
Salt of the Earth Labor College