



HE Ambassador Néstor Osorio Londoño
Embassy of Colombia
3 Hans Crescent
London SW1X 0LN

5 February 2019

Dear Ambassador,

I am writing on behalf of Workers Uniting to express major concern at the murders of two members of FENSUAGRO, our sister trade union in Colombia. Workers Uniting is an international trade union formed by the UK and Ireland's largest trade union, Unite, and the USA's largest private sector trade union, United Steelworkers.

On 4 January 2019, FENSUAGRO trade unionist Wilmer Miranda was murdered in Cauca. Wilmer also belonged to the COCCAM coca growers association and the Patriotic March political organisation, both of which have seen several of their members killed since the peace deal was signed in November 2016.

On 28 January 2019, another FENSUAGRO member, Dilio Corpus Guetio, was also murdered in Cauca. Dilio also worked as a rural guard and helped coordinate voluntary crop substitution programmes, a central component of the peace agreement.

At least three more FENSUAGRO trade unionists were killed in late 2018. In October, María Caicedo Muñoz was abducted and killed in Argelia, Cauca. In November, Álvaro Gómez was killed, apparently by soldiers, in San Alfonso, Cauca. In December, Gilberto Zuluaga Ramírez was killed in Cauca.

That all five of these deaths occurred in Cauca is no coincidence. The department is statistically the most dangerous region in Colombia for social leaders, with 125 people murdered there from 2016 to 2018, according to a recent report by the Patriotic March, the Cumbre Agraria and the INDEPAZ institute. The report says that overall 226 social leaders were murdered in Colombia between 1 January 2018 and 17 November 2018. The lack of security in Cauca is replicated in many other parts of the country.

Workers Uniting is highly alarmed that people continue to be murdered in Colombia for their roles in labour organisation, as well as in other forms of social and political activism. This impacts on social conditions and on basic democracy, with people too intimidated to demand that their labour, democratic and human rights are respected.

Guaranteeing security in regions such as Cauca is critical to ensuring that a stable and lasting peace becomes a reality for all Colombians. We urge the Colombian government to fully implement the security stipulations contained in the peace agreement to address the ongoing human rights crisis and to ensure protection for social leaders, including trade unionists, community leaders and people working to implement the peace process.

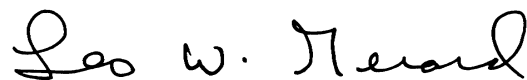
We also ask that the government make every necessary effort to identify and prosecute the intellectual authors, as well as the material ones, of these terrible crimes.

Workers Uniting expresses its solidarity to all those working to defend human rights, peace and social justice in Colombia and offers our sincere condolences to the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely,



Len McCluskey
General Secretary, Unite the Union



Leo W. Gerard
International President, United Steelworkers

cc.

Nesto Osorio, Colombian Ambassador in Great Britain
Peter Tibber, British Ambassador in Colombia