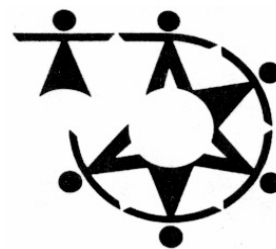


THE

MUSTARD SEED



Denver Justice & Peace Committee

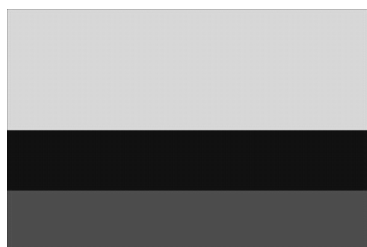
Celebrating over 25 years of peace and justice!

901 W. 14th Ave., Suite 7, Denver, CO 80204, 303-623-1463, www.denjustpeace.org

September 2005, Volume 26, Number 3

Colombia: A Backgrounder

By Harriet Mullaney



For 40 years, Colombia has been experiencing an internal armed conflict which has produced only negative consequences for the majority of its 44 million

citizens. In the late 1990's, former President Andres Pastrana proposed "Plan Colombia"—an internationally supported program to achieve lasting peace by recognizing that increased violence and drug cultivation were symptoms of the more serious problems of poverty, discrimination and exclusion, and social and economic injustices. Colombia was also facing an economic crisis, high unemployment, increasing debt, and the consequences of an earthquake in its coffee-producing region.

European governments, with the exception of Spain, directed their monies to nongovernmental organizations outside the control of the Colombian or U.S. governments. In FY2000, the U.S. gave \$50 million to the effort and just approved \$735 million for FY2006. As early as 1999, the U.S. shifted the Plan's focus from one of peace and development to one directed at security. Since 9/11, Washington has promulgated a "unified campaign" against terrorism and narcotics trafficking. It is not surprising that 80% of the aid

received in the last five years has gone to the military and police for counter-insurgency, counter-narcotics, and oil pipeline protection. President Alvaro Uribe has used Washington's shift as an opportunity to recast Colombia's internal conflict as one of a state overwhelmed by terrorists. Circumstances in the Middle East have intensified the U.S.'s desire for good relations with Colombia because of its large reserves of petroleum, natural gas, and coal, as evidenced by U.S. Special Forces training Colombian soldiers in counter-insurgency tactics in order to protect an oil pipeline in guerrilla-controlled territory. The alliance between the U.S. and Colombia runs deep.

U.S. policy goals for Colombia include support for: counter-narcotics, counterinsurgency, and counterterrorism activities; peace and regional stability; democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; and the promotion of socioeconomic development and

"... 80% of the aid received in the last five years has gone to the military and police for counter-insurgency, counter-narcotics, and oil pipeline protection."

the attainment of humanitarian needs. The reality is that no clear strategy exists to achieve these broadly outlined, but poorly delineated, goals, which at times appear to be at cross-purposes.

(Continued on page 8)

Inside This Issue

Message from the Board..... page 2
GSTV Program Update page 3
Caminos Update page 4

Fall events calendar..... page 5
Legislative Update page 6/7
Colombia Facts page 9
Ban on IMET/Call to Action.. page 10

MISSION STATEMENT

The Denver Justice and Peace Committee is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting human rights, economic justice and lasting peace in Latin America through education, solidarity projects and nonviolent activism.

DJPC Board of Directors:

Eileen Arnolds
Andy Bardwell
Jessica Buckley
Jim Chaney
Rick Clifford
Connie Curtis
Gabriela Flora
Richard Kruch (Chair)
Harriet Mullaney (Vice Chair)
Fernando Pineda-Reyes
Marin Alex Popov (Treasurer)

DJPC Staff:

Kara Martinez - Director of Program Services
Daniel Lopez - GSTV Coordinator

DJPC Interns:

Ellie Azoff—Legislative Intern
Alexandra Burke—Events Intern
Mara Markowitz—GSTV Intern
Julia Paul—Grants Intern
Nicki Vanveen—Media/Web Intern
Christine Mayorga--Regis Work/Study

The Mustard Seed Editors:

Harriet Mullaney & Kimberly Urish

Contributors:

Ellie Azoff, Gabriela Flora, Kara Martinez, Harriet Mullaney, Daniel Lopez

Printed by P & L Printing

Thanks to all the volunteers and interns who continue to help out in the office, with program development, fundraising, newsletter publication, mailings and website. We couldn't do it without you!

Message from the Board

By Gabriela Flora

This fall DJPC's calendar is peppered with activities related to Colombia. You may be asking why is an organization that has its roots in Central American solidarity work focusing on Colombia. This is an important question we on the board want to address.

Colombia is currently experiencing brutal atrocities similar to those that Central America underwent in the 1980s. The indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities are among those in Colombia caught between the cross fire and coercion of the military and paramilitary forces on the one side and the guerillas on the other. Many of these communities are valiantly and peacefully resisting both sides. Yet, government forces equipped and trained by the U.S. and paramilitary forces are massacring rural communities, trade unionists and community organizers with impunity.

While Colombia has parallels with Central America, Colombia has geopolitical strategic importance for the U.S. that impacts the whole continent. With shifts to the left in the democratically elected governments in Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, and with Bolivia and Ecuador undergoing popular movements of resistance, the U.S. government is even more eager to fortify its power and have a strategic base in the region from which to counter policies and governments that do not follow the U.S. line.

Colombia can boast the largest number of graduates from the School of the Americas; it is the largest recipient of U.S. aid in the hemisphere; and Colombia has the second largest U.S. embassy in the world (just behind Iraq).

The U.S. has played a behind the scenes role in maintaining the oligarchy in power since Colombia's independence from Spain and in suppressing leftist guerillas since the 1960s. The Andean Initiative started in the mid-1990s began a steady flow of financial support, principally military aid, to Colombia. This was expanded with "Plan Colombia" that poured \$3.9 billion, of which 80% was in military aid, into the country between 2000 and 2005.



The U.S. Congress just approved, with much debate, to continue providing aid to Colombia to the tune of \$735 million for fiscal year 2006, though Plan Colombia was technically set to expire this year. "Plan Colombia" was originally justified in the name of fighting the war on drugs. However, it has been unsuccessful in decreasing coca production in this region and

(Continued on page 12)



GSTV UPDATE

By Daniel Lopez, Program Coordinator

After a 6-week summer break, the Global Solutions to Violence program is officially back in action! DJPC's unique educational outreach initiative once again finds itself in a period of transition. GSTV offers interactive workshops, focused on issues related to Non-Violence, the Impact of Globalization, Human Rights, Immigration, and the Links Between Economic and Military Violence, to local high schools and community groups. We ended the Spring Semester on a very positive note.

From early January until the end of May, a total of 16 classes (367 students) were taught in 6 different schools. At our Annual Retreat, the committee decided to focus our energy and resources for the Fall on establishing long-term relationships with specific teachers/institutions. These include: East High School, West High School, Ralston Valley High School, Denver School for the Arts, Bishop Machebuef High School, Escuela Tlatelolco, University of Denver, Peace Jam, and Lincoln High School. We were also written into a grant proposal by Mile-Hi Youth Corps, a school-to-work life-skills program in central Denver.

In order to meet the demand for classes, we are currently in the process of recruiting and training new Educators. Following in the footsteps of such inspirational instructors as Kareen Erbe and Catherine Raveczky, our teachers will be the "face of GSTV". Along with our dedicated intern, Mara Markowitz, (and under my supervision), they will make sure that the GSTV curriculum is being implemented in the most professional and pedagogically-sound manner.

Our dedicated committee members, including Jeremy Lee, Nicole Tembrock, Lisa Knoblauch, Ermalinda Monge, Lonna Bloom, Harriet Mullaney, Phil Woods, and Eileen McCarthy-Arnolds, have spent countless hours developing and updating curriculum, making contact with teachers, and brainstorming ways for the GSTV program to grow and reach as many students as possible. As well, our Grants Intern, Julia Paul, has been instrumen-

tal in identifying sources for possible funding. (One of our primary goals for the 2005/6 academic year is to become self-sustainable.)

Indeed, a solid foundation has been set. We have a worth-while curriculum to offer students (who appear to be hungry for it) at a time in our nation's history when such information couldn't be more needed. But we can't keep this momentum alive without active volunteers who are willing to help! If you are interested in getting more involved in GSTV, or know of someone who would be, please let me know! My email address is: Daniel@denjustpeace.org.

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school she attends...Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

- Eleanor Roosevelt

With this as our guiding principle, and as individuals willing to enact it in a concrete way, we WILL make a difference in the way our youth are educated locally about issues of global importance.

Seguimos Adelante!!

CAMINOS UPDATE

By Kara Martinez

Accompaniment News

This past August, former accompanier and founder of the CAMINOS steering committee Susan Cotton, along with new member Sarah Sloane, traveled to Guatemala. They met up with accompanier Heidi Gross and former accompanier Brad Lawton who is living in Guatemala, both were sponsored by our group. Heidi has since finished her service and returned home to begin a graduate degree. We thank her for her dedication and service this year and wish her well in future endeavors! In one of her long and descriptive letters, she shared the following message with us,

What is our responsibility in the creation of a more just and peaceful world? Our response might be summed up by the word 'accompaniment', to deviate from other pathways for awhile (and then forever), to walk with those on the margins, to be with them, to let go. Through this encounter with God at the margins, we as individuals and societies experience an ongoing, profound, spirit-led conversion of the heart, soul and mind. Slowly our centers of gravity move outside of ourselves and we find ourselves suddenly dancing with friends in unknown places and with great joy.

-Marie Dennis, *St Francis and the Foolishness of God*

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Guatemala Accompaniment Project. From its beginnings during the refugee return, G.A.P. has been present in Guatemala to witness transitions as the Peace Accords were signed and communities began the rebuilding process. Ten years later [G.A.P.] remain[s] a strong accompaniment presence in Guatemala, as again the government is closing political space and attacks continue to rise against those who speak out for justice. Accompaniers are living alongside participants in legal cases and providing a presence to threatened organizations. (www.nisgua.org)

Promesa Partnership

Susan and Sarah continued their journey in Guatemala to the rural village of Tesorito where CAMINOS supports a local health promoter through the Promesa Partnership. There they found a dire situation in terms of access to necessary medicines. Under CAFTA the situation is expected to worsen since the availability of cheaper generic drugs will be restricted.

The CAMINOS committee continues in its fundraising efforts. We would like to extend a special thank you to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Outreach for providing a seed grant to support this initiative and to CAMINOS member Tommy Timm for his efforts in promoting the cause. Finally, we welcome you to join us for our October 1st benefit concert at the Mercury Café (see flier insert if you live in the Denver metro-area) and Build for Peace at Family Homestead on October 15th. Hope to see you there!



Online Donations!

Tired of writing out that check? Finding a stamp and waiting for the mailman? Save paper. Donate to DJPC online! Visit our website www.denjustpeace.org and make a credit card donation to DJPC via a secure payment form!

DJPC Fall Event Calendar

DJPC has prepared a fall full of events including a Colombia series that will focus on education and advocacy. Please mark your calendars and join us!

Colombia Briefing – From the Global Solutions to Violence Curriculum

September 22nd from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at DJPC office (901 W. 14th Avenue, Denver)

Please RSVP by September 21st (Free and open to the public)

DJPC offers the opportunity for community members to attend this dynamic, interactive lesson on how the U.S. War on Drugs impacts Colombian society, bringing real-word concerns about the personal, societal, and global conflict to life.

DJPC/KGNU-AM 1390 Benefit Concert

Saturday, October 1st 9:00-12:00 p.m. at the Mercury Café (22nd and California)

Tickets sold at the door: KGNU and/or DJPC Members \$12 OR Non-members \$15

For our members located in the Denver-metro area, please see our flier insert for more information!

Colombia Movie Night – “Maria Full of Grace”

October 6th from 6:30-9:00 p.m. at 4700 W. 37th Street, Denver.

Please RSVP by October 5th (Educational viewing)

“Winner of the Dramatic Audience Award at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival and two major Awards at the Berlin Film Festival *Maria Full of Grace* is one young woman’s journey from a small Colombian town to the streets of New York. A bright, spirited 17-year old girl, Maria Alvarez (Catalina Sandino Moreno) lives with three generations of her family in a cramped house in rural Colombia and works stripping thorns from flowers in a rose plantation. The offer of a lucrative job involving travel – in fact becoming a drug “mule” – changes the course of her life. Far from the uneventful trip she is promised, Maria is transported into the risky and ruthless world of international drug trafficking. Her mission becomes one of determination and survival and she finally emerges with the grace that will carry her forward into a new life. Directed by Joshua Marston. In Spanish with English sub-titles. An HBO Films/Fine Line Features release.” (www.mariafullofgrace.com)

Build for Peace Work-a-thon

Saturday, October 8th with Jefferson County Open Spaces

Saturday, October 15th at Family Homestead

Build for Peace is our most effective fundraiser and we appreciate your support in this event. It is an excellent opportunity for you to get out into the Denver community, contribute to a meaningful project and help DJPC in the process. It is also a great way to meet other DJPC members and volunteers! Volunteers (like you!) commit to a day’s work on a project. You can sign up by calling the DJPC office at (303) 623-1463 or e-mailing us at djpc@denjustpeace.org.

DJPC’s Annual Awards Night

Saturday, October 22, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

First Mennonite Church of Denver (430 W. 9th Avenue)

Reception and Silent Auction starting at 6:30 p.m.

Keynote speaker and awards starting at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 in advance (\$5 for students/seniors), and are \$12 at the door. For tickets call DPJC at (303) 623-1463 or email: djpc@denjustpeace.org.

Join the Denver Peace & Justice Committee for our annual Awards Night Celebration. Hear our keynote speaker, Luis Gilberto Murillo—former governor of Chocó, Colombia’s poorest state and a leading Afro-Colombian figure—speak about human rights, the Colombian civil war, and U.S. military funding.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Ellie Azoff

CAFTA

On the night of July 27th 2005, the Central American Free Trade Agreement was passed by an extremely close vote of 217-215. This outcome is disappointing for many reasons, particularly for the tampering with democratic procedures. Generally, 15 minutes are allowed to encourage people to vote for or against a bill and when these fifteen minutes are up, the vote is closed. However, when the Republicans realized that CAFTA would be voted against by 180-175, they did not close the vote at the designated time. Instead, the Republicans ran around trying to convince those who had not yet voted to vote for CAFTA while, of course, providing adequate "encouragement" for politicians to agree to it. In fact, the Republicans were so desperate that Bush, Cheney and Rice had made extremely rare appearances in the halls of Congress to convince legislators to vote for CAFTA.

The vote was open until well after midnight, and it was then that CAFTA passed. This manipulation of the rules demonstrates how our democracy can be so easily thwarted to protect economic interests. On a more positive note, it is clear that members of Congress through their intense debate seriously questioned the free trade model. In addition, this debate and exposure do not bode well for future free trade agreements, such as the Andean Free Trade Agreement.

For Central America, the U.S.'s ratification of CAFTA is a devastating blow. Despite forceful citizen protests, all but Costa Rica and Nicaragua have passed the bill. For the countries that ratified the bill, this most likely means lower wages, longer hours, and unacceptable labor standards. Although Bush promises that labor standards will be protected under CAFTA, the reality is that the agreement only states that countries must uphold their own labor standards. This is a weak clause in the face of already deficient labor standards coupled with a more onerous appeal process under CAFTA.

The close vote on CAFTA demonstrates the incredible power grassroots organizations, individuals and others have in persuading their politicians to make the right choices. Also, a recent Wall Street Journal poll showed that 79% of the U.S. public is dissatisfied by the U.S. approach towards trade and only 16% favor agreements like NAFTA and CAFTA. These are stark and encouraging numbers. CAFTA may have squeaked by, but the fight to stop it should be applauded.

Please take a moment to contact your Representative to express your thanks or disappointment with their vote. Your voice makes a difference.

Against CAFTA:

Diana DeGette:	(303) 844-4988	(202) 225-4431
Tom Tancredo:	(202) 225-7882	(720) 283-9772
Mark Udall:	(303) 650-7820	(202) 225- 2161
John Salazar:	(202) 225-4761	(970) 245-7107

For CAFTA:

Bob Beauprez:	(202) 225-2645	(303) 940-5821
Joel Hefley:	(719) 520-0055	(202) 225-4422
Marilyn Musgrave:	(202) 225-4676	(970) 663-3536



Legislative Update continued...

Colombia

On August 1st, the State Department decided that Colombia met U.S. criteria for good human rights conditions under U.S. law. International human rights organizations assess Colombia's progress differently, believing more should be done.

The McGovern-McCollum-Moore amendment to cut \$100 million in military aid to Colombia lost 186-234. This ultimately means that the failed "Plan Colombia" will be extended into 2006. The U.S. will be sending \$735 million to Colombia, making it the top recipient of U.S. aid outside of the Middle East. In addition to the passing of "Plan Colombia" for another year, 25% of U.S. military aid to Colombia, that has been frozen since 2004, is now being sent to Colombia under false pretenses. 75% of aid is sent every year to Colombia without questions, while the other 25% is withheld to make sure Colombia abides by human rights conditions set by the U.S. These funds were originally withheld from Colombia because of a lack of progress in cases involving abuses by the Colombian military. Although two cases involving the extrajudicial executions of trade unionists were advanced, they are moving slowly while other cases go nowhere. U.S. aid, however, is being released regardless. The State Department is required to meet with human rights organizations such as the Latin American Working Group and Amnesty International before releasing the remaining 25%. Despite these organizations urging the U.S. to continue to withhold aid, their call was not heeded.

The U.S. has also agreed to aid Colombia through President Uribe's "Justice and Peace Plan" which further degrades the progress of human rights in Colombia. This plan calls for negotiations with illegal paramilitary forces to demobilize. These paramilitary forces have committed extensive human rights abuses as well as drug trafficking crimes. If they agree to demobilize, they will be held virtually unaccountable for their crimes. The plan does not require that they fully dismantle their organizations, and prosecutors will only have 60 days to investigate and charge paramilitaries for their crimes. These types of investigations can take a year or two to complete, thus a 60 day investigation period is completely inadequate. This plan is an insult to all who have suffered under paramilitary actions.

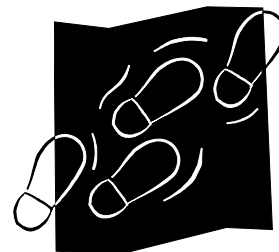
We should take a moment to recognize that although aid to Colombia was released, the matter was the most hotly debated foreign relations issue this year. This demonstrates a mounting awareness for the failure of "Plan Colombia" and the terrible conditions of human rights in Colombia.

We give thanks to the following representatives who voted in favor of cutting aid to Colombia:

Diana DeGette:	(303) 844-4988	(202) 225-4431
Tom Tancredo:	(202) 225-7882	(720) 283-9772
Mark Udall:	(303) 650-7820	(202) 225-2161
John Salazar:	(202) 225-4761	(970) 245-7107

We also want to address those who voted no to cutting military aid:

Bob Beauprez:	(202) 225-2645	(303) 940-5821
Joel Hefley:	(719) 520-0055	(202) 225-4422
Marilyn Musgrave:	(202) 225-4676	(970) 663-3536



*****Please take a moment to thank those representatives who voted in favor of cutting aid as well as to express your concerns to those who voted against it.*****

(Colombia: A Backgrounder - Continued from page 1)

Drug use and drug trafficking are costing both countries dearly in terms of lost lives and opportunities, but issues of supply and demand are not given equal attention. Coca cultivation is up, and Colombia's portion of the U.S. cocaine market has increased from 80% to 90%.

Counterterrorism and counterinsurgency have been interwoven with counter-narcotics, particularly since 9/11. Three guerrilla groups function in Colombia and all have been designated "terrorist" by the U.S. State Department. Despite efforts to demobilize these paramilitary forces, concerns remain about the efficacy of the process and the state's ability to prosecute human rights violations perpetrated by these forces. The U.S.'s support of Colombia's military has prompted neighboring states to increase their

military expenditures, which puts the region at risk. Significant refugee outflows to Venezuela and Ecuador have also heightened regional tensions.

In early August 2005, the U.S. State Department certified Colombia's compliance with the human rights conditions contained within the enabling legislation. Certification was granted in spite of the Department's own report, issued in February, which served as a litany of abuses.



Be an Advocate. *By Ellie Azoff*

There are many ways that you can make a difference in the movement for social justice in Colombia from right here in the United States.

- Is Coke your beverage of choice? Our advice is: put it down, step away. Help trade unionists in Colombia by boycotting all products produced by the Coca-Cola Company whose bottling plants in Colombia have continuously violated the human rights and labor rights of trade unionists. The company has contracted paramilitary forces to murder, torture, kidnap, or otherwise silence trade union leaders. These actions in turn drive fear into those who would sympathize with workers who organize in order to improve their livelihood.
- Write a letter to the editor to a local newspaper. Use the information you find here in *the Mustard Seed* or look online for more information. Letters to the editor are a great opportunity to discuss and promote awareness while reaching out to a wide audience of people who might not normally contemplate the issue.
- Take some time out to volunteer for a non-profit or non-governmental organization that addresses the human rights issues in Colombia. Here at DJPC, we can offer a number of ways to get educated and involved.
- Contact your Senators and Representatives to let them know that human rights in Colombia are important. We have a number of legislative advocacy efforts in process, available on our website: www.denjustpeace.org.

While its enumerations appeared thorough, the account significantly understated certain problems. (e.g. It reported that the number of internally displaced persons (IDP) may have exceeded 2 million, including 800,000 children. However, the Global IDP Project reports that over 3 million have been displaced since 1985, with Afro-Colombians and indigenous disproportionately affected, making Colombia's IDP crisis second only to that of the Sudan.) Further exacerbating the human rights situation is the fact that existing laws are not being implemented, arrests and prosecutions are inconsistent, and impunity reigns.

Despite lofty goals, U.S. policy has fallen far short of even beginning to address the root causes of the social, political, and economic problems that exist in Colombia. We have provided neither the guidance nor the moral imperative to assist Colombia in addressing these issues. Given our intent to enter into a bilateral trade agreement with Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru (and possibly Bolivia at a later date), it would only seem advantageous to help to restore order and nurture development.

(Continued on page 9)

(Colombia: A Backgrounder - Continued from page 8)

Few specifics are known about this proposed Andean Free Trade Agreement (AFTA). Negotiations were scheduled for completion by February 2005, but have been delayed without a new deadline being set.

AFTA is the next step in the drive toward a Free Trade Act of the Americas (FTAA), encompassing the entire hemisphere with the exception of Cuba. It will undoubtedly be patterned on the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) and the Central American Free Trade Act (CAFTA), and fraught with similar provisions compromising workers' rights, the environment, national sovereignty, and opportunities for genuine and sustainable human development.

Action: The state of affairs in Colombia has far-reaching effects—nationally, regionally and internationally. It behooves all DJPC members to follow and speak out on developments in Colombia

in an effort to promote human rights, economic justice and lasting peace. Later this month, the Foreign Operations bill will go to conference committee where significant differences between the House and Senate versions will be worked out.

Please let your Senators and Representatives know that you want future funding for the demobilization of paramilitaries to incorporate strong human rights standards, economic aid to internally displaced persons, and an end to impunity. Additionally, please express your concern over the proposed implementation of another free trade act that does not respect and promote the citizens rights of our trading partners.

THE FACTS

- **40** – The number of years Colombia has been in a civil war.
- **30,000** – The number of people killed each year in Colombia due to violence.
- **3 million** – The number of people forcibly displaced by paramilitary groups since 1985. *Such groups have been encouraged to proliferate by international corporations.*
- **3,588** – The number of people 'disappeared' in Colombia between 1996 and 2004.
- **123** – The number of union leaders murdered worldwide in 2003.
- **94** – The number of union leaders murdered in Colombia in 2003 (**76%** of the worldwide total).
- **185** – The number of trade unionists assassinated in Colombia in 2002. (**85%** of the worldwide total). *Colombia is the most dangerous place in the world to be in a trade union.*
- **8** – The number of union leaders at Coca-Cola bottling plants murdered since 1989. **Hundreds of others have been tortured, kidnapped or detained illegally.**
- **7** – The number of paramilitary leaders graduated from the U.S. Army "School of Americas". *Colombia boasts the highest number of graduates.*
- **80% (\$3.2 billion of \$4 billion)** – Percentage of U.S. aid that has gone to Colombian security forces with the remainder barely making a difference in the other needs of the Colombian people in the past six years.
- **5** – Rank of Colombia as the 5th largest recipient of U.S. aid after Iraq, Israel, Egypt & Afghanistan. *It is the largest recipient outside the Middle East.*
- **85%** – Percentage of Colombia's rural population that lives in poverty.
- **5.4 billion** – Number of dollars spent by the US on the drug war which made no dent in the availability of cocaine on U.S. streets. Prices are at an all time low.
- **23%** – Percentage of increase of cocaine production in Peru. **35%** in Bolivia.
- **2%** – Percentage, overall, of the increase of cocaine production.

** Gathered from the following sources: Colombia Commission of Jurists, www.killercoke.org, www.soaw.org, & The Latin American Working Group.

REQUEST FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

Tell Congress to Maintain the Ban on IMET to Guatemala

Contact your representatives and senators and urge them to maintain the ban on International Military Education and Training (IMET) to Guatemala in the final version of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill.

In June, for the first time in fifteen years, the House of Representatives lifted the ban on IMET to Guatemala. The June decision came as part of the House version of the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. The Senate, however, maintained the ban in its version of the Appropriations Bill.

Congress is back from recess, and staff from the House and Senate subcommittees are reconciling the two versions of the bill. NOW is the time to contact your representatives and senators to tell them to follow the Senate version of the Appropriations Bill and ask that the full ban on IMET to Guatemala be maintained!

Guatemala has not yet made the substantive reforms necessary to justify a removal of the ban on IMET. The Guatemalan military has yet to be held accountable for its past abuses and continues to commit abuses against the Guatemalan

people. Resuming assistance now would reward the military for continued human rights violations.

A congressional decision to allow the release of military funds through IMET would indicate U.S. approval of the Guatemalan government and its human rights record, at a time when the human rights situation in Guatemala is grave. The ban on U.S. military assistance to Guatemala consists of restrictions on both IMET and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) funds.

Both the House and Senate left the ban on FMF funds intact for 2006. Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY), the top Democrat on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, expressed her apprehension on the House floor over lifting the IMET ban. "I am also concerned that the bill places no conditionality whatsoever on U.S. military assistance to Indonesia and international military education and training for Guatemala. ...[D]espite the Guatemalan government's noncompliance with military reform stipulated in the Peace Accords, we have removed IMET restrictions on that country as well."

The ban on U.S. military aid to Guatemala originally came as a response to the Guatemalan military's abysmal human rights record amidst the armed internal conflict. The Guatemalan military has undergone some reforms since the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, but has not yet made enough progress to justify receiving U.S. military assistance again.

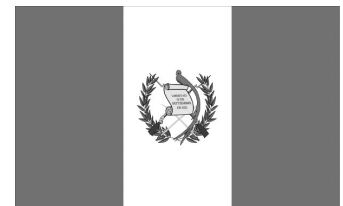
****CALL**** the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to reach the offices of your senators and your representative. When you're transferred to the office, ask to speak to or leave a message for the foreign policy staffer. It is especially important to contact the members of the Senate and House Foreign Policy Committee.

If you speak to the aide of a senator, thank him or her and urge continued support of the maintenance of the ban in the final version of the Appropriations Bill. If you are speaking to the aide of a congressional representative, stress that now is not the time to lift the ban and urge your member of Congress to adopt

(Continued on page 12)

For further info, see the last NISGUA military aid action alert:
http://www.nisgua.org/articles/act_now_tell_congress_no_IMET.htm

WOLA's Memo on IMET:
http://wola.org/central_america/guatemala/imet_memo_final_long.pdf



Luis Gilberto Murillo

Awards Night Keynote Speaker

From 1998-1999, Luis Gilberto Murillo served as governor of the the Colombian state of Chocó, in the country's Pacific Coast Region. On June 16, 2000, armed paramilitaries kidnapped Sr. Murillo in the suburbs of Bogotá and held him for 24 hours, threatening to kill him and his family if he did not pay around \$250,000 (U.S.).

After that terrifying experience, and frustrated by the inability or unwillingness of the government security forces to protect him, Sr. Murillo brought his family into exile in the U.S. A person of striking intelligence and integrity, Sr. Murillo is quickly distinguishing himself as one of the most important Colombian voices for peace in the U.S.

Before his abduction and flight to the U.S., Sr. Murillo had lived a charmed life full of achievement. As a youth he scored the highest mark on Colombia's national baccalaureate exam. His exceptional scores gained him a prestigious national scholarship to the Soviet Union, where he studied from 1984 to 1990, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering and a Master's Degree in Mining from the State Geological University of Moscow, Russia.

When he returned to Colombia in 1990, Sr. Murillo took an influential post at the state of Chocó's Environmental



Protection Agency (CODECHOCO). In 1993, the Colombian president, Cesar Gaviria, promoted Sr. Murillo, then 27, to head the agency. As director of the department, Sr. Murillo initiated projects to protect biodiversity and the land rights of Chocó's rural Afro-Colombian population.

In 1995, Bogotá Mayor Antanas Mockus Sivickas appointed Sr. Murillo deputy director of the Environmental Protection Department of Bogotá (DAMA), the nation's capital. Sr. Murillo's hard work and innovative strategies while at the department soon made him one of the most well known Afro-Colombians in the country. He also has taught development, environment, and ethnic rights at the Externado, Saint Thomas, and Chocó State Universities in Colombia.

Though people of African decent comprise anywhere

between one-third and 43 percent of the population (surveys and census numbers conflict), the country's blacks are largely poor, lack access to education and health care, and are underrepresented in the nation's socio-economic and political life. Sr. Murillo's meteoric rise, then, is all the more exceptional when placed in this context.

In 1998, a coalition of Afro-Colombian organizations in Chocó drafted Sr. Murillo as their gubernatorial candidate. Trusting in the democratic movement surging through Latin America, Sr. Murillo decided to reject politics as it had traditionally been practiced in Colombia; he didn't align himself with either of the establishment dominant parties, and instead decided to run as an independent. Sr. Murillo defeated both parties in a close race and was elected.

Once in office, he was determined to follow his mandate of reform. He implemented visionary land-use policies, constantly pushing for rural development in the state.

Sr. Murillo also addressed the country's political conflict head on. In 1998 he attempted to declare Chocó a neutral zone, a Territorio de Paz. But the combatants didn't listen to his appeals. Soon his political skill and popularity won him praise from the national press--

(Continued on page 12)

*(Luis Gilberto Murillo -
Continued from page 11)*

including Colombia's venerable financial magazine *Dinero*.

But quickly the reforms came to a halt. In January of 1999, a federal appeals court invalidated his election in a controversial ruling and removed him from office. (The 1998 Chocó gubernatorial election was marred by last-minute fraud committed by the Liberal Party. An initial investigation found that the Liberals had forged 3,000 votes, and gave the election to Sr. Murillo. The appeals court

decided to count those 3,000 votes, tipping the balance to the Liberals.) Sr. Murillo's removal from office battered local confidence in the democratic process. It also set back his environmental and land reform policies, and sunk the hopes of the state's Afro-Colombian population.

Between his removal from office and his exile in the U.S., Sr. Murillo continued to work for environmental protection and Afro-Colombian advancement. Currently, Sr. Murillo is the Colombia Policy Coordinator for Lutheran World Relief and an

active member of the Afro-Colombian Working Group and the Washington D.C.-based Colombian Human Rights Committee. He also served as a board member of the U.S. Office on Colombia and Latin American Peace Committee of the American Friends Service Committee.

© Global Exchange 2005
2017 Mission Street, #303
San Francisco, CA
www.globalexchange.org

(Message from the Board - Continued from page 2)

Colombia's share of the U.S. Cocaine market has increased. Since 9-11 the rhetoric has changed to fighting terrorism. This has meant that counter-insurgency no longer needs to be a hidden agenda of aid to Colombia, but instead can be lauded by those pushing for further expansion of U.S. aid to Colombia.

The underreported war in Colombia is displacing record numbers of people, devastating lives, reeking havoc on the environment (through large scale fumigation), increasing poverty and inequality, and fortifying the U.S.'s position in the region.

As an organization that seeks justice and peace in Latin America, we must take up the call to understand the realities and ramification of U.S. policy in Colombia and work to change its course. What happens in Colombia will impact the entire continent.

(Request for Immediate Action - Continued from page 10)

the Senate language in the final version of the Bill.

Be sure to remind your senator or representative that the Guatemalan military continues to carry out unprovoked acts of violence against its own people. **2005 has been the worst year in terms of human rights violations since the signing of the Peace Accords.** More human rights defenders were attacked in the first half of this year than in all of last year, 2003, or any year prior to that since the Peace Accords were signed.

Rep. Kolbe is largely responsible for lifting the IMET ban in the House version. It is especially important that he hears from constituents. Please pass this alert on to any of your friends and family in Tucson and southeastern Arizona.

CONGRESSIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Sen. Wayne Allard
303-220-7414; 202-224-5941

Sen. Ken Salazar
303-455-7600; 202-224-5852

Rep. Diana DeGette, 1st District
303-844-4988; 202-225-4431

Rep. Mark Udall, 2nd District
303-650-7820; 202-225-2161

Rep. John Salazar, 3rd District
970 245-7107; 202-225-4761

Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, 4th District
970-663-3536; 202-225-4676

Rep. Joel Hefley, 5th District
719-520-0055; 202-225-4422

Rep. Tom Tancredo, 6th District
720-283-9772; 202-225-7882

Rep. Bob Beauprez, 7th District
303-940-5821; 202-225-2645

Join us Saturday, October 22nd for

DJPC Annual Awards Night

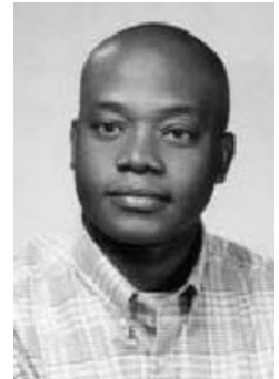
First Mennonite Church of Denver - 430 W. 9th Avenue

6:30 p.m.—Reception & Silent Auction

7:00 p.m.—Keynote speaker & awards

Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$5 for students/seniors & \$12 at the door.
For tickets, call DPJC at (303) 623-1463 or email: djpc@denjustpeace.org.

Featuring keynote speaker,
Luis Gilberto Murillo,
Former Governor of Chocó, Colombia



This year's event looks to be just as interesting and fun as last year. Don't miss out!

We need your help acquiring donated items for our silent auction.

Examples of what we are looking for :

Items:

- Framed pictures or posters
- Clothing or accessories from Central or South America
- Jewelry, pottery or artwork

Services:

- A massage from a certified massage therapist
- Tickets to a concert, opera or show
- A few hours of assistance like gardening, painting or carpentry

Donations must be received no later than October 19th. If you have any questions about donating, please contact us at events@denjustpeace.org or call 303-623-1463. Please consider a donation this year. We greatly appreciate your continued help and support which makes our annual Awards Night such a success year after year!!



Welcome to DJPC and THANK YOU to our long-time members!

Enclosed you will find a remittance envelope. Your donations are much appreciated! You can also donate to our organization securely online with a credit or debit card. Visit our web-site: www.denjustpeace.org

Click on the grey "DONATE NOW" button on the left hand side of the page. Please note that DJPC incurs a processing fee of 3.25% of your donation for this service.

¡Volunteers!

If you would like to become more involved in DJPC's work, please call us at (303) 623-1463 to discuss volunteer opportunities.



If you no longer wish to receive *The Mustard Seed*, please call our office and let us know: (303)623-1463.

Denver Justice & Peace Committee

901 W. 14th Ave., Suite 7
Denver, CO 80204

Address Service Requested

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit #3294
Denver, CO