

Ambassador Mauricio Rodriguez  
Embassy of Colombia to the United Kingdom  
3 Hans Crescent  
London SW1X OLN

12<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Dear Ambassador,

I am writing to express my concern about the case of Colombian human rights defender David Rabelo Crespo, imprisoned since 14<sup>th</sup> September 2010. He is currently being held in La Modelo Prison, Bucaramanga, on accusations of “conspiracy to commit a crime” and “aggravated homicide”.

I understand that before his arrest, Mr. Rabelo was the spokesperson for regional human rights group CREDHOS, and a leading member of MOVICE, Colombia’s largest human rights organisation. Mr. Rabelo has made several high profile public denouncements against former president Uribe and his human rights work has led to the imprisonment of various paramilitaries and members of the Colombian army.

It is therefore of grave concern that the case against Mr. Rabelo is based on testimonies from former paramilitaries, one of whom - paramilitary Mario Jaimes Mejía, alias “El Panadero”- was in fact imprisoned as a result of Mr. Rabelo’s work. Testifying against Mr. Rabelo has also allowed him to reduce his prison sentence from over 40 years, to a maximum of eight.

It is clear that Mr. Rabelo’s detention is a reprisal for his work dedicated to the defence of human rights, and an attempt to silence any further criticism. Mr. Rabelo is one of numerous members of human rights organisation MOVICE who have been targeted as a result of their work and is one of hundreds jailed for speaking out in Colombia.

Mr. Rabelo’s detention belies claims that the Colombian government is committed to improving human rights. Furthermore, MOVICE has reported a 44% increase in abuses against its members since the new President Santos came to power, showing that the situation is in fact getting worse.

I urge you to forward my letter to the Colombian authorities, asking them to take urgent measures to stop the violations against MOVICE members, starting with the release from prison of David Rabelo and others like him detained in Colombia.

I look forward to progress in this matter,

Yours Sincerely,  
NAME:

ORGANISATION: