

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

All of the violent groups in Colombia are terrorists. FARC, ELN, and disbanding paramilitary groups, all of them are terrorists. They are terrorists because they are attempting against a respectable democracy and due to their methods of extermination of human beings.

Colombia is a democracy which is progressing in safety for all its citizens, respectful of liberties and pluralism, eager to construct social cohesion, striving for transparency and respectful of the independence of the different institutions which make up the State.

The use of force, or even only a threat to that democracy is pure terrorism. There were violent groups throughout the continent which intended to fight against dictatorships and were called insurgents. In Colombia the violent groups attempt against democracy; as a consequence, they are ranked as terrorists.

The violent groups in Colombia are terrorists because their finances proceed from a lethal business against humanity: that of drug trafficking.

The violent groups in Colombia are terrorists because they kidnap, plant bombs indiscriminately, recruit and murder children, pregnant women and elderly people, and use landmines taking in their path the lives of thousands of innocents. All these practices infringe human rights and are only a small example of their cruelty.

The violent groups in Colombia are terrorists because they destroy the ecosystems: they have devastated two million hectares of tropical forest in order to grow and produce cocaine.

The violent groups in Colombia are terrorists because they have only brought displacement, pain, unemployment and poverty to our country.

The violent groups in Colombia are terrorists because they kidnap in any place, they do not mind kidnapping Venezuelans in Venezuela or Ecuadorians in Ecuador; their struggle is not ideological; on the

contrary, it is to amass money from cruelty and illicit businesses. This shows that their objective is transnational terrorism and not a political struggle in Colombia.

The violent groups in Colombia are terrorists. The guerrillas changed their old ideas of a Marxist revolution to become mercenaries financed by illicit drugs and gave birth to paramilitary terrorism as well.

The Government of Colombia by no means accepts that the label of terrorist be removed from these groups, or that the status of belligerence be given to them.

The Government of Colombia, with its Armed Forces and its Constitution shall continue its strife until these terrorist groups are defeated. They have received the most generous peace offerings as may be proven with the kind treatment received by the 46.000 demobilized.

Today the world must not forget that FARC has kidnapped 750 citizens in the last 10 years, who are still missing to this day. The release of Ms.

Consuelo González de Perdomo and Ms. Clara Rojas, although joyous for all Colombians, cannot conceal the horror of their kidnapping for so many years, or the torture suffered by soldiers and police and political leaders who are still held hostage by FARC; they are chained day and night and kept in cages, as witnessed by the two released hostages.

The Government of Colombia shall work along with the Catholic Church in order to determine an area for negotiations, based on the premise that the humanitarian mission carried out by the priests shall not represent bias in favor of the FARC terrorists.

January 11, 2008.

(End)