

Geneva, 4 October 2012

His Excellency  
Juan Manuel SANTOS  
President of the Republic of Colombia  
Carrera 8, n°7-26 Palacio de Narino, Bogota  
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## Intimidation and repression against striking workers in Puerto Gaitán

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing on behalf of IndustriALL Global Union which represents more than fifty million workers throughout mining, energy and manufacturing industries, in some 140 countries throughout the world. USO, Unión Sindical Obrera, is an important member of this large global union family.

Hereby, I would like to express our deep concern about acts of repression and intimidation perpetrated recently, in Puerto Gaitán, by security and intelligence forces as well as private security forces, on USO representatives and on striking workers. On several occasions, the deployment of security forces has prevented USO representatives meeting with striking workers.

We can only express our indignation and protest in front of such a violation of the fundamental right of Freedom of Association. We call on the Colombian government to guarantee these rights enshrined in the Colombian Constitution and ILO Convention 87. These practices are also in contradiction of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

IndustriALL Global Union is following very closely the situation of the labour conflict in Puerto Gaitán between Termotecnica, CEPCOLSA and the striking workers represented by the USO.

We have been pleased to take note that in the Conclusions of the High level Tripartite Mission to Colombia 14-18 February 2011, all full respect of human rights including fundamental principles and rights at work were underlined by the government as one of its key policies. Consequently, we hope that the Government will take all the necessary measures to stop the anti-union practices denounced above and will bring immediate end to the violence against USO, its members and striking workers.

Only a dialogue between the companies involved in the conflict with USO as the legitimate bargaining partner, fully respecting national and international labor standards will lead to a fair solution of this conflict.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a vertical line on the left, a horizontal line in the middle, and a diagonal line on the right that slopes downwards.

Jyrki Raina  
General Secretary

CC:

Angelino Garzon, Vice-President of the Republic of Colombia

Rafael Pardo Rueda, Ministry of Labour

Rodolfo Vecino Acevedo, President of USO