

August 23, 2006

Dr. Alvaro Uribe Velez  
President of the Republic of Colombia  
Cra. 8 No.7-26  
Palacio de Narino  
Santa Fe de Bogota  
COLOMBIA  
(571) 566-2071 (fax)

Dear President Uribe,

On behalf of the 1,050,000 members of Canada's four major public sector Unions, we raise our voice to protest your government's decision to liquidate ADPOSTAL as a public provider of Postal Services in Colombia. For some time now, the Sindicato de Trabajadores Postales de Colombia (STPC) has exposed the deliberate maneuvers taken by the Administration of the Postal Services to weaken the operations and economic viability of the company in order to justify privatization. These maneuvers include deregulation, contracting out, layoffs of experienced personnel and cutbacks to quality services. The deregulation of postal services in the country has increased the proliferation of many small postal operators who work outside the law, and compete with the regular postal services through the hiring of low-wage labour and non-professional staff. The Administration has also gutted Adpostal of its most profitable operations, by handing those lucrative contracts to the private sector.

Attempts by unionized workers to bring these legitimate concerns to the administration of Adpostal have been ignored by your government and have led to the systematic repression of the union leaders and activists, particularly since the appointment of Director Luz Stella Páez Cañón. It appears that the mismanagement of the Postal Services has been systematic and deliberate.

The liquidation of the remaining public postal services threatens the livelihood of over 950 unionized postal workers and eliminates the provision of services to 1,400 communities in the country whose population cannot afford private-for-profit mail delivery.

This blatant attack against the postal workers and the services they render is part of a general policy implemented by your government to privatize all lucrative aspects of public services in Colombia. This same policy is part and parcel of the bilateral free trade agreement that your government recently signed with the USA, and forms part of a long list of liquidations and privatization that is seriously undermining the delivery of quality public services to your citizens. The liquidation of Adpostal is one of many similar privatizations

that have been carried out by your government against telecommunications, Ecopetrol, SENAT, the Institute for Social Security and the network of public hospitals that provide vital health services to the Colombian population.

Around the world, privatization is leading to the greater impoverishment of the general population. It is responsible for cutting vital services to the majority and throwing thousands of workers out of their jobs. It is responsible for increasing unemployment, wiping out hard earned pensions and other benefits and contributing to the proliferation of precarious jobs. Nowhere has privatization proven to be a positive step for the majority of citizens. Your government is in the position to take leadership on this issue. Help rebuild the Colombian postal system to serve Colombians.

We emphatically urge your government to:

- stop the privatization of ADPOSTAL;
- meet with the STPC to discuss their proposals for re-structuring ADPOSTAL;
- ensure the human rights of STPC leaders who have been threatened after speaking out against corruption and the privatization of ADPOSTAL;
- protect the labour rights and job security of the 950 ADPOSTAL employees.

Sincerely



Deborah Bourque,  
Presidenta Nacional  
Canadian Union of Postal Workers



John Gordon  
Presidenta Nacional  
Public Service Alliance of Canada



Paul Moist  
Presidenta Nacional  
Canadian Union of Public Employees



James Clancy  
Presidenta Nacional  
National Union of Public and  
General Workers

cc. Sra Maria del Rosario Guerra de la Espriella, Minister of Communications, Colombia  
Dra. Luz Stella Páez Cañón, Director ADPOSTAL, Bogota

Dr.Diego Palacio Betancourt, Minister of Social Protection, Colombia  
Dr. Volmar Antonio Pérez Ortiz, Peoples' Defender  
United Nations High Commission on Human Rights – Colombia Office  
ILO Regional Office  
SINDICATO DE TRABAJADORES POSTALES DE COLOMBIA (STPC)  
Carlos Rodríguez, President of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT)  
Philip Jennings, General Secretary, UNI Global Union  
Ken Georgetti, President, Canadian Labour Congress  
Hans Engelberts, General Secretary, Public Service International