

**Lots of promises forgotten
by next morning...**

Johan Galán Casanova

**Report on human rights violations against
Colombian unionists, 2007**

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Escuela Nacional Sindical
Área de Defensa de Derechos
Humanos y Laborales

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Introduction

The annual report on anti-union violence in 2007 is the product of the systematic institutional monitoring of the diverse recent episodes that show the unfortunate evolution of this phenomenon in the country. Once again, it shows the persistence of an aggressive anti-union culture in Colombia, as well as the participation of diverse legal and illegal actors in these processes, and the clear situation of impunity that characterizes the results of these actions.

The report classifies the acts of anti-union violence according to the type of violation, gender of the victim, geographical location, type of unionist, presumed authors of the crime, the economic sector in which the victim works, and the union confederation to which they belong.

As in previous years, this exercise could not be possible without the help of the Colombian union confederations (CUT, CGT, and CTC), unions and especially the human rights secretaries of the unions, and the Comision Colombiana de Juristas, which provided valuable help with respect to the topic of impunity in regards to cases of anti-union violence.

Élver Fernando Herrera Arenas
Director, Human Rights Unit

General panorama of the violations to the life, liberty and personal integrity of union affiliates during 2007

The number of forced displacements, illegal searches, assassination attempts, and arbitrary detentions increased, and a large number of death threats and assassinations were also committed. To this can be added the large number of violations of union freedoms.

Despite the decrease in the number of homicides, disappearances, harassments, kidnappings and tortures between 2006 and 2007, the ENS reported 418 violations of the human rights of Colombian unionist as of December 31, 2007, an increase of 36 violations, which indicates that during the year, at least one incident of anti-union violence occurred per day.

The number of forced displacements increased from 7 reports in 2006 to 101 in 2007, the number of illegal searches doubled (4 reports) as well as the number of assassination at-

tempts (11 reports), while other types of violations also increased, such as arbitrary detentions (19 reports).

In 2007, as in the previous year, the high number of violations such as death threats, with 224 episodes reported and armed incidents of harassment, with 17 episodes, persisted. Only the number of forced disappearances decreased, from five to two, as well as the number of kidnappings, from five acts to zero between 2006-2007. During the last two years, there were no homicides of family members of unionists reported.

There was an important decrease in the number of homicides of unionists, from 72 cases to 39 in 2007, however in any rate the statistic is an alarming reminder of the persistent anti-union violence in Colombia. On the other hand, the tendency to murder unionists transformed in to

**Violations to the right to life, liberty and personal integrity of
Colombian unionists 2006-2007**

Type of violation	N° of cases 2006	%	N° of cases 2007	%	Variation
Death threats	244	63,9	224	53,6	-20
Forced displacements	7	1,8	101*	24,2	94
Homicides	72	18,8	39	9,3	-33
Arbitrary detentions	16	4,2	19	4,5	3
Harrasment	22	5,8	16	3,8	-6
Assassination attempt with or without injuries	5	1,3	11	2,6	6
Illegal searches	2	0,5	4	1,0	2
Dissappearances	5	1,3	2	0,5	-3
Torture	4	1,0	2	0,5	-2
Homicide of family member	0	0,0	0	0,0	0
Kidnapping	5	1,3	0	0,0	-5
Total	382	100,0	418*	100,0	36

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

- * The notable 22,4% increase in the statistics related to forced displacements of unionists between the years 2006-2007, can be explained by the efforts of the Escuela Nacional Sindical to research further the documentation of these cases in its SINDERH database, showing how this phenomenon which deeply affects unions was not as visible in earlier years due to the fear of the victims to denounce their situation of displacement.
- ** Of the total number of violations to the life, liberty and personal integrity of unionists, 24,2% correspond to forced displacement, which shows that without the existence of this phenomenon in the country during 2007, the total number of violations to the life, liberty, and personal integrity of Colombian unionists would be 317.

other forms of violence during 2007, which explains the increase in forced displacements, illegal searches, assassination attempts, arbitrary detentions, and the high level of death threats.

Although the number of homicides decreased, the number of assassination

attempts, which are in effect frustrated homicides, increased. According to the 2007 report of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Colombia continues to be the most dangerous country in the world to be a practicing trade unionist.¹

1. See 2007 report, International Trade Union Confederation ITUC, www.ituc-csi.org.

Historically, the death threats, homicides, disappearances, and arbitrary detentions have been the most common forms of anti-union violence, and those which generate the most social terror, weakening of union organizations, and even the disappearance of unions. For this reason, the 418 violations to the life, liberty and physical integrity of union affiliates signify not just a massive violation of personal rights, but also a material obstacle to the exercise of union freedoms in the country.

To this grave impact of the violence on union freedoms, we can add the multiple legal and practical limitations that the current government imposes on unions, to prevent them from functioning freely. An example of this is the increase in the number of denied requests to register the creation of or changes to union organizations in Colombia (see Annex table 6), the decrease in the coverage of collective bargaining agreements² (see Annex table 7), and the large number of strikes and work stoppages declared illegal³ (see Annex table 8).

Antioquia, Valle del Cauca, Santander, Bogotá, Caldas and Putumayo were the location of 75% of the violations in 2007

The states which presented the highest increases in violations were Antioquia, with 50 additional violations in comparison with the previous year, Santander, with 21 additional violations, Caldas with 13 additional violations, Putumayo with 15 additional violations, and Valle del Cauca, with 9 additional violations.

The largest number of homicides of unionists occurred in Valle del Cauca during 2007, with 6 cases, a statistic that increased in 2007 in relation to the previous year, followed by Cauca with 5 cases, one more than the previous year, and Antioquia with five cases, but which represents a 50% decrease in comparison with the previous year. In the state of Arauca, which registered the fourth highest number of homicides, four less assassinations occurred in 2007 in relation to 2006.

2. CUT, CGT, CTC and CPT, Los derechos laborales y las libertades sindicales en Colombia: Evaluación y propuestas para el desarrollo del acuerdo tripartito, Bogotá, November 2007, p. 76.
3. Tabulation by the Escuela Nacional Sindical, using information provided in 2007 by the Ministry of Social Protection.

**Violations to the human rights
of unionists by state**

State	2006	%	2007	%	Total
Antioquia	104	27,2	154	36,8	258
Bogotá D.E.	66	17,3	28	6,7	94
Valle	37	9,7	46	11,0	83
Santander	18	4,7	39	9,3	57
Nariño	26	6,8	14	3,3	40
Atlántico	17	4,5	17	4,1	34
Arauca	16	4,2	14	3,3	30
Caldas	7	1,8	20	4,8	27
Bolívar	15	3,9	11	2,6	26
Cauca	14	3,7	10	2,4	24
Cesar	17	4,5	5	1,2	22
Putumayo	3	0,8	18	4,3	21
Meta	8	2,1	5	1,2	13
Caquetá	4	1,0	8	1,9	12
Magdalena	8	2,1	2	0,5	10
Cundinamarca	6	1,6	2	0,5	8
Risaralda	1	0,3	7	1,7	8
Tolima	3	0,8	4	1,0	7
Norte de Santander	2	0,5	4	1,0	6
Chocó	3	0,8	2	0,5	5
Córdoba	3	0,8	1	0,2	4
Guajira	2	0,5	2	0,5	4
Sucre	1	0,3	2	0,5	3
Total	382	100,0	418	100,0	800

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

* The states of Guaviare, Huila and Quindío had one or less reports of anti-union violence in 2006-2007.

**Homicides against unionists in Colombia
according to state***

By State	2006		2007		Total	
	Cases	%	Cases	%	Cases	%
Valle	4	5,6	6	15,4	10	9,0
Antioquia	10	13,9	5	12,8	15	13,5
Cauca	4	5,6	5	12,8	9	8,1
Arauca	7	9,7	3	7,7	10	9,0
Putumayo	2	2,8	3	7,7	5	4,5
Bogotá D.E.	5	6,9	2	5,1	7	6,3
Cesar	2	2,8	2	5,1	4	3,6
Nariño	6	8,3	2	5,1	8	7,2
Norte de Santander	2	2,8	2	5,1	4	3,6
Risaralda	1	1,4	2	5,1	3	2,7
Atlántico	3	4,2	1	2,6	4	3,6
Caldas	1	1,4	1	2,6	2	1,8
Caquetá	1	1,4	1	2,6	2	1,8
Córdoba	2	2,8	1	2,6	3	2,7
Guaviare	0	0,0	1	2,6	1	0,9
Meta	1	1,4	1	2,6	2	1,8
Sucre	1	1,4	1	2,6	2	1,8
Bolívar	4	5,6	0	0,0	4	3,6
Chocó	2	2,8	0	0,0	2	1,8
Cundinamarca	1	1,4	0	0,0	1	0,9
Guajira	2	2,8	0	0,0	2	1,8
Magdalena	5	6,9	0	0,0	5	4,5
Santander	5	6,9	0	0,0	5	4,5
Tolima	1	1,4	0	0,0	1	0,9
Total	72	100	39	100	111	100

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

* Amazonas, Boyacá, Casanare, Huila, Quindío, San Andrés, Vaupés and Vichada did not report homicides against unionists during 2006-2007.

Other states with lesser occurrences of assassinations of unionists were Guaviare, Putumayo, and Risaralda, where few acts were committed but an upward tendency was registered. This fact, as well as the increase in homicides in Cauca and Valle del Cauca, can be explained by the significant presence of illegal armed groups in the southern part of the country.

We can see an opposite tendency in the states in the northern region of the country, such as Atlántico, Bolívar, Córdoba, Arauca and Santander, where the statistics have decreased due to the diminished presence of illegal armed actors, and an obvious displacement of the intensification of the conflict towards the southern part of the national territory.

The forms of violence against women unionists intensify and violence against male unionists persists

Violations to the human rights of unionist by gender

Gender	2006	%	2007	%	Total cases	Total %
Masculine	296	77,5	251	60,0	547	68,4
Femenine	86	22,5	145	34,7	231	28,9
No data*	0	0,0	22	5,3	22	2,8
Total	382	100,0	418	100,0	800	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

* The victims with no data in this table correspond to the 22 members of the ADIDA union threatened in 2007, whose identity remains in absolute secrecy according to the wishes of both the union leaders and the threatened unionists.

In 2007, women affiliated to unions suffered 145 violations to their rights to life, liberty, and personal integrity, 59 more than the previous year, which represents more than a 33% increase in violations suffered by them in regards to the 2006 records.

The large majority of victimized female unionists during this period belong to the health and education sectors, and in various cases they are leaders of their union organizations.⁴

4. Como en el caso de Ana Silvia Melo Rodríguez, dirigente del Sindicato Manuela Beltrán de trabajadores expendedores de alimentos y bebidas y Mercedes Consuelo Restrepo Campo, dirigente sindicalizada de SUTEV, ambas asesinadas en el 2007.

During 2007, there were 123 violations to the life, liberty and personal integrity of women unionists and 117 violations against male unionists of the education sector, as well as 11 violations against women unionists and 24 violations against male unionists of the health care sector.

In regards to male unionists, there were 251 violations in 2007, 45 less than in 2006. This shows us that the violence against men tends to decrease as the violence against women increases.

Homicides of unionists in Colombia according to gender

Gender	2006		2007	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
Masculine	61	85,5	32	79,5
Femenine	10	14,5	7	20,5
Total	72	100	39	100

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

The women unionists assassinated during 2007 are: María Teresa de Jesús Burbano, of the Sindicato de Trabajadores del Magisterio de Nariño; Alcira Tapias Muñoz, of the Asociación de Institutores del Cauca; María Teresa Silva Reyes, of the Asociación de Institutores del Cauca; Ana Silvia Melo Rodríguez, of the Sindica-

to Manuela Beltrán de Expendedores de Alimentos y Bebidas; Bernarda Zúñiga Imbachi, of the Asociación de Institutores del Cauca; Marlene Berrío de Rodríguez, of the Asociación de Institutores del Caquetá; and Mercedes Consuelo Restrepo Campo, of the Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Unión del Valle.

Violations by type of unionist

Violations to the human rights of unionists by type of unionist

Type of unionist	2006	%	2007	%	Total cases	Total %
Rank and file member	244	63,9	267	63,9	511	63,9
Union leader	132	34,6	149	35,6	281	35,1
Union advisor	6	1,6	2	0,5	8	1,0
Total	382	100,0	418	100,0	800	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

The strategy of simultaneously leaving unions without leaders or social platforms, thus encouraging ruptures and weakening organizational processes, was more evident in 2007 than in earlier years, with an increase in violations to both union leaders and rank and file members. This situation did not occur in 2004, 2005, and 2006, when the rank and file members were most affected. With regards to 2006, there was an increase of 23 violations

to rank and file members, as well as an increase of 17 cases of violations of the rights of union leaders.

Of the total number of violations registered in 2007, 267 correspond to rank and file unionists, while 149 violations involve the victimization of union leaders, showing an upward tendency in comparison to the statistics from 2005 and 2006.

Contrary to that tendency, the violations against union advisors have

tended to decrease throughout the years, arriving at a minimal level of two violations recorded during the last year, similar to the level in 2004 and 2005, when three and two violations, respectively, were registered.

**Homicides of Colombian unionists
according to type of unionist**

Type of unionist	2006		2007	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
Rank and file unionist	58	80,6	29	74,4
Union leader	12	16,7	10	25,6
Union advisor	2	2,8	0	0,0
Total	72	100,0	39	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

In an inverse tendency with regards to the total number of violations, the number of homicides decreased in all cases, although in the case of union leaders, the proportion of homicides compared to the total number of homicides increased between 2006-2007 (25,6% of the total in 2007, as compared to 16,7% in 2006). This is evidence of the reactivation of the tendency to exterminate the leadership as a way of diluting the power of unions in the country.

William Cabuyales, of the Sindicato de Pequeños Agricultores de Cabuyal; Miguel Ángel Macías Guaca, of Asoina; Luis Miguel Gómez Porto, of Sindagricultores; Ana Silvia Melo Rodríguez, of the Sindicato Manuela Beltrán de Trabajadores Expendedores de Alimentos; Genaro Potes, of Sintragrim; Julio César Gómez Cano, of ADIDA; Héctor Robledo González, of Sintrazarzal; Leonidas Silva Castro, of Asinort; Jairo Giraldo Rey, of Sinaltraifrut, and Mercedes Consuelo Restrepo Campo, of SUTEV.

Violations by economic sector: the violations against teachers and health care and agricultural workers increase

Violations to the human rights of unionists by economic sector

Economic sector	2006	%	2007	%	Total cases	Total %
Community and personal services	272	71,2	318	76,1	590	73,8
Manufacturing	42	11,0	29	6,9	71	8,9
Agriculture, hunting and fishing	11	2,9	27	6,5	38	4,8
Mines and quarries	23	6,0	22	5,3	45	5,6
Electricity, gas and water	15	3,9	7	1,7	22	2,8
Comerse	4	1,0	5	1,2	9	1,1
Transportation, storage, and communications	10	2,6	5	1,2	15	1,8
Banking and finance	1	0,3	5	1,2	6	0,7
Construction	4	1,0	0	0,0	4	0,5
Total	382	100	418	100	800	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

76% of the total violations (318) committed against unionists in 2007 were against workers of the community and personal services sector, which is made up of public employees, independent workers, education, and health care workers.

In recent years, due to the fact that the union movement in the private sector has been weakened, in part due to anti-union practices by business owners, the violence has been ever more concentrated in public sector unions and in particular of sub-sectors such as

education and health care. This can be explained by the mobilization of these unions against the gradual worsening and privatization of these services, as well as against the fiscal policies that are cutting the funds for these sectors that are transferred from the national government.

The high incidence of violations in the community and personal services sector is principally due to the increase in violations against teachers, which went from 193 violations in 2006 to 260 in 2007, 35 cases more than the previous year. This is also explained by the increase in violations against public works employees, which increased from 17 violations in 2006 to 18 in 2007, and the high number of violations against health care sector workers, which increased by 35 cases between 2006 and 2007.

ADIDA, Anthoc and Educal, the most victimized unions in 2007

The unions ADIDA, Anthoc, and Educal register 44,8% of the total violations that occurred during the last year, given that the education

sector has remained the sector with the highest frequency and number of assassinations of unionists, with 26 homicides in 2007, equaling 66,7% of the total homicides last year. This tendency is carried over from previous years (see Annex table 2).

ADIDA, with 144 violations (34,4%) against its members in 2007 (44 more than the previous year) tops the list of most victimized union organizations in Colombia in regards to human rights, followed by Anthoc with 29 violations (5,9%) and Educal Caldas with 19 (4,5%).

The abrupt increase in violations in cases such as that of ADIDA, coincides with a political moment in which the unions are strengthening their strategies of historical reconstruction and organization of the victims, working with the CUT in the forming of the Regional Committee of Union Victims, and the holding of the Regional Encounter of Union Victims in Antioquia.⁵

After the community and personal services sector, the manufacturing sector occupies second place in the number of violations, registering a total of 29 violations, 13 less than in

5. "If violent actors persecute us, it is because they fear us, and they fear us because we are doing our job well, denouncing and mobilizing, using the credibility that we have earned from years of legal, peaceful, and democratic action". Presentation in the Statewide seminar on human rights of ADIDA, 2007.

2006. A large number of the violations were committed against members of unions such as Sinaltrainal with 19 events registered (4,5%).

The third most victimized sector is the agricultural sector, with 27 events in 2007, which is an over 100% increase in comparison with the violations during 2006 (11), with the homicides rising from four to ten between 2006-2007. Fensuagro was the most victimized organization of this sector

in 2007, with 16 violations recorded, including six assassinations.

The mining and energy sector follows the agricultural sector in terms of the number of violations committed, maintaining almost the same level of anti-union violence with 22 events registered in 2007, one less than in 2006. The most victimized organization was the Union Sindical Obrera (USO), with 18 violations committed against it in 2007.

Homicides of Colombian unionists according to economic sector

Economic sector	2006		2007	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
Community and personal services	51	70,8	26	66,7
Agriculture, hunting and fishing	4	5,6	10	25,6
Comerse	2	2,8	2	5,1
Manufacturing	6	8,3	1	2,6
Mines and quarries	3	4,2	0	0,0
Electricity, gas and water	2	2,8	0	0,0
Construction	1	1,4	0	0,0
Transportation, storage, and communications	2	2,8	0	0,0
Banking and finance	1	1,4	0	0,0
Unspecified economic sector	0	0,0	0	0,0
Total	72	100	39	100

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

The teachers assassinated during 2007 are:

Jaime Vanegas Castellanos, María Teresa de Jesús Chicaiza Burbano, Francisco Leonel Bedoya Burgos Francisco, Enrique Arnoldo Campo Medina, Luis Fabián Moreno Marín, Alcira Tapia Muñoz, María Teresa

Silva Reyes, José Jaimes Rojas, Ángel Miguel Macías Guaca, Luis Miguel Gómez Porto, Ana Silvia Melo Rodríguez, Genaro Potes, Julio César Gómez Cano, Héctor Robledo González, Leonidas Silva Castro, Jairo Giraldo Rey, Mercedes Consuelo Restrepo Campo.

Violations by union confederation

Violations to the human rights of unionists by union confederation

Union confederation	2006	%	2007	%	Total cases	Total %
CUT	358	93,7	382	91,4	740	92,5
Not affiliated to a confederation	17	4,5	24	5,7	41	5,1
CGT	6	1,6	11	2,6	17	2,1
CTC	1	0,3	1	0,2	2	0,3
Total	382	100,0	418	100,0	800	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

The large number of affiliates of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) and its broad coverage in different economic sectors and regions of the country, accounts for the fact that it is the confederation most affected by events of anti-union violence in Colombia during the last two decades. This tendency worsened last year, moving from 358 to 384 violations

between 2006-2007, and despite the drop in the number of assassinations against its affiliates in this period (from 61 to 32 homicides between 2006-2007), 82% of all homicides against unionists are still committed against affiliates of the CUT.

The seriousness of the situation of other national union confederations, such as the Central General

de Trabajadores (CGT) is also evident. The CGT is the second most victimized union confederation in Colombia, with 11 violations registered in 2007, almost double the amount of violations against its members in comparison with the year 2006.

**Homicides of unionists in Colombia
by union confederation**

Union confederation	2006		2007	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
CUT	61	84,7	32	82,1
CGT	4	5,6	3	7,7
CTC	1	1,4	1	2,6
Not affiliated to a confederation	6	8,3	3	7,7
Total	72	100,0	39	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

Presumed authors of the violations

Violations of the human rights of unionists by presumed author

Presumed author of the crime	2006	%	2007	%	Total cases	Total %
No information/not identified	259	67,8	342	81,8	601	75,1
Paramilitaries	85	22,3	38	9,1	123	15,4
State entity	21	5,5	27	6,5	48	6,0
Guerrilla	14	3,7	11	2,6	25	3,1
Employer	3	0,8	0	0,0	3	0,4
Private security groups	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Common criminals	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Total	382	100,0	418	100,0	800	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

As in 2006 and other years, during the last year, the number of violations in which the identity of the presumed author is not clear was greater than the number of cases in which at least there are hints with respect to the identity, moving from 259 to 342 violations of this type, 83 more than in 2006.

On the other hand, although the violations committed by illegal armed

groups dropped over the last year, the paramilitaries are still the greatest victimizers of unionists in Colombia, with 38 violations of union workers registered, both against union leaders and rank and file activists especially of the health care, education, and agricultural sectors, with more intensity in the states of Valle del Cauca, Antioquia and Cauca. Two of these

violations are homicides, while the rest are death threats, assassination attempts, harassments, and forced displacements.

Alter the paramilitary groups, State entities are presumably responsible for at least 27 human rights violations of unionists, presumably perpetrated by organs such as the Colombian Army (12 violations), the National Police (11 violations), the state intelligence service DAS (3 violations) and the investigators of the Attorney General's Office CTI (1 violation). There were six more violations registered in 2007 in comparison with 2006, with five being homicides of unionists.

In 2007 there were also cases of violations in which there was a mix of actors and events, combining violations to the personal integrity of workers with the violation of union freedoms, such as the case of the death threats against various unionists from the Unión General de Trabajadores de la Empresa Exportaciones Bochica S.A. in the municipality of La Ceja, Antioquia. These workers were "invited" by the police to not affiliate to the union in February of 2007, after

showing them a video about anti-union violence in their workplace. Ten days later, they were threatened with death through the medium of pamphlets and graffiti, by the paramilitary group "Aguilas Negras del Oriente". This took place while the Social Protection Ministry denied their right to form a union through an administrative decree, without any real legal backing.

In the same way, there were other cases of homicides which took place at military blockades, after other actions such as harassment and collective arbitrary detentions, showing the growth in victimization by the armed forces.⁶

In addition, the guerrilla presumably participated in 11 cases of anti-union violence in 2007, a statistic which decreased by three events in comparison with 2006. This violence corresponds to five death threats and six forced displacements of Colombian unionists, primarily women (with only one male victim) of the education sector in the states of Arauca, Narino, Atlantico, Huila and Caqueta.

Some rituals of vigilante justice by diverse acors, which have been

6. Examples of this are cases such as the assassinations of the unionists Juan Carlos Abiche, Víctor Julio Benavides and Simón Corena in the municipality of Fortul, Arauca, members of Fensuagro.

part of the historic characteristics of the socio-political violence in Colombia,⁷ such as assassinations to create public terror (in front of family and other members of the community), the goriness in the process of victimization, and the open identification of the victimizer

who is easily identified by uniform, distinctive slogans, as a way of demanding collective submission and strengthening territorial control, has begun to gradually shift towards the selective, anonymous, spontaneous, and unforeseen assassination, in order to assure complete impunity for the crime.

Homicides of unionists in Colombia by presumed actor

By presumed actor	2006		2007	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
State entity	2	2,8	5	12,8
Paramilitaries	9	12,5	5	5,1
Employers	1	1,4	0	0
Private security groups	0	0	0	0
Common criminals	0	0	0	0
Guerrilla	7	9,7	0	0
No information/not identified	53	73,6	32	76,9
Total	72	100,0	39	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

7. See: "2.515 o esa siniestra facilidad para olvidar. 21 años de asesinatos de sindicalistas en Colombia", Cuaderno de Derechos Humanos, Number 18, Escuela Nacional Sindical, 2007.

Anti-union violence continues during the administration of Uribe Velez (August 7, 2002 to December 31, 2007)

During the almost six years of the current administration, 419 unionized workers have been assassinated, despite the efforts made to cover up this reality, by generating an atmosphere of confusion, trying to make the international community believe that the situation of systematic, extended violence has already been solved, and that governmental initiatives like the democratic security policies have proven their effectiveness.

Without failing to acknowledge the reduction in the number of homicides of unionists, it is important to take in

consideration all of the violence that has occurred during this period. The violence has intensified, with almost 30% of the total violations registered during the last 22 years taking place during this time.

This means that in these past years 2.765 violations to the life, liberty and physical integrity of unionists have been committed, a statistic which proves the lack of structural change in anti-union violence. The human rights crisis which continues to plague the union movement is undeniable.

Total homicides during the Uribe administration, August 7, 2002 to December 31, 2007

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Homicides	48	94	96	70	72	39	419

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

**Total violations during the Uribe administration,
August 7, 2002 – December 31, 2007**

Type of violation	Number of cases	Percentages
Illegal searches	22	0,8
Death threats	1.573	56,9
Assassination attempts with or without injuries	55	2,0
Dissappearances	26	0,9
Forced displacements	243	8,8
Arbitrary detentions	232	8,4
Homicides of family members	0	0,0
Homicides	419	15,2
Harrassment	156	5,6
Kidnappings	29	1,0
Torture	10	0,4
Total	2.765	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

In the current political climate, the President or high-level government officials often make declarations questioning the legitimacy of the union movement, linking it to guerrilla groups, or justifying anti-union violence as a form of violence between the different armed actors in the conflict, insinuating that the union movement is allied with some of those actors.

Two clear examples of this trend are: 1) The declarations of the Vice-

President about the three unionists assassinated by the Colombian Army in Arauca in 2004, who he claimed were guerrillas killed in combat, later on the courts convicted the soldiers responsible for this crime. 2) The declarations of the President against the entire union movement due to the participation of four unionists in a left-wing political seminar that took place in Quito, Ecuador in July, 2007.

The Justice and Peace Law and anti-union violence⁸

Despite the 1.840 violations to the life, liberty and personal integrity of Colombian unionists between 1986-2007 of which 332 have been homicides presumably committed by paramilitaries, the acknowledged crimes against unionist victims by demobilized paramilitaries who have made confessions under the Justice and Peace system in the year 2007, have been relatively few (see Annex table 9).

However, what these testimonies of the paramilitary leaders in the framework of the Justice and Peace process have been able to prove are the connections of these groups with national and multinacional companies in economic sectors such as agricultura, mining, energy, manufacturing, telecommunications, tourism, and transportation, as well as connections with public institutions such as the intelligence service Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad (DAS) and local governments in regions such as Uraba.

Links between ILO cases and information provided by the Justice and Peace system⁹

As of December 20, 2007, there were 38 paramilitaries linked to 28 investigations of cases of anti-union violence, due to their testimonies given under the Justice and Peace system. As a result of these investigations, only four sentences have been handed down and only 12 of the authors responsible for the crimes have been detained.

With respect to regions that have been historically hardest hit by anti-union violence presumably committed by paramilitaries, such as Antioquia, Santander, and Cundinamarca, since the testimonies of the demobilized paramilitaries began, the Attorney General's office has only reported the opening of one new investigation and one arrest for each region.

The absence of significant advances in the investigation and punishment of those responsible for grave human rights violations, not just of the right to life, liberty

8. Report presented by the Colombian union confederations to the high-level delegation of the ILO in December 2007.

9. Secondary sources: Comisión Colombiana de Juristas, (CCJ). Primary source: "Progress report 2007", National Attorney General's Office.

and physical integrity but also of union freedoms and of international humanitarian law, has deepened and prolonged the anti-union violence.

These aggressions require a justice system which recognizes the systematic character of these crimes, making evident their gravity to society, establishing the causes

of its expansion, guaranteeing the protection and participation of the victims in the criminal investigations, and establishing guarantees for the no repetition of these crimes. In this way only can the right to truth, justice and reparations be made a reality.

Impunity for anti-union violence

Analysis of the cases assigned by the Attorney General's office to the sub-units created in the context of the Tripartite Agreement¹⁰ and the five prosecutors of the Human Rights Unit¹¹

Investigation phase

In its most recent report, the Attorney General's office refers to the 1.244 cases of human rights violations against unionists which are part of Case 1787 in the ILO. These

cases are in the following stages, as of December 20, 2007.

— 727 cases in a preliminary phase, without the identification of the presumed author of the crime.

— 117 cases in an investigatory phase, in which the presumed actor or actors have been identified.

— 5 cases have been archived, as the presumed author could not be ascertained, for which reason the investigation was suspended.

— The other 395 cases have been assigned but there is no additional information about their current state.

10. In the 95th International Labor Conference, the representatives of the government, employers, and workers signed a tripartite agreement to promote union freedoms and democracy in the framework of the ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

11. *¡We haven't done anything but we can do alot!*, the conclusion reached in regards to the topic of impunity presented by the National Attorney General's Office to the Colombian union confederations, the national government, and the Permanent Representative of the ILO in Colombia on May 10, 2007, (see the document "*Union freedoms and decent work*," presented by the CUT to the US embassy and US Congressmen on August 9, 2007).

Trial stage

The Attorney General's office did not report on how many cases have been sent to the criminal courts for trial. However, it was mentioned that there were three rulings of innocence and nothing is known of the state of four other cases.

This office also reports that there has been 82 guilty sentences handed

down, an example of the success in the efforts to investigate human rights violations against unionists.¹² However, it is not clear that these advances have been due to the decided action of the sub-unit of special prosecutors, as these guilty sentences have been handed down in this way:

Guilty sentences for crimes of anti-union violence, before the Tripartite Agreement

Year	Number
2001	1
2002	6
2003	9
2004	8
2005	11
2006	11
Total	46

Source: SINDERH-ENS

During 2007, the special ILO judges handed down 26 rulings related to cases of anti-union violence. In addition,

other criminal law judges handed down rulings in ten other cases, for a total of 36 rulings.

12. The information provided by the Attorney General's Office is contradictory, as in the same report it states that there have been 77 guilty sentences handed down during the same period of time.

Cases of anti-union violence with guilty rulings handed down, in the context of the Tripartite Agreement¹³

Judicial decisión	Number of cases
Extrajudicial execution attributed to the Colombian Army	1
Anti-union violence	14
Casualties in combat	15
Classified as "not union violence", due to the lack of knowledge of the motives of the crime	16
Events attributed to motives different from that of the exercise of union activity	4
Crimes of passion and/or personal motives	10
For economic motives – kidnapping followed by homicide	6
For economic motives – robbery and murder	14
Due to attacks by the FARC of a specific population	2
Total de cases	82

Of the 2.557 total cases of anti-union violence registered by the Escuela Nacional Sindical between January 1986 and January 2008, there have been only 82 guilty sentences handed down, which means that only 3,3% of the cases have been technically resolved, which signifies that the level of impunity is 96,7%, which is equivalent to 2.475 cases that have yet to be resolved. If the justice system continues at this same pace, it would need more than thirty years to resolve all the cases, that is, if there is no further investment in human resources or judicial infrastructure.

Even more disturbing is the role that the victimizers play in these processes. They justify their acts arguing without evidence that the victim was linked to illegal armed groups. In some cases the justice system has accepted this as a valid argument to slander the victim and shame his memory, discarding without reasons the anti-union nature of the crime.

During an investigation, the motives of the crime should be evaluated, instead of investigating the victim. It should be presumed that when a crime is committed against a unionist, the

13. PHanded down by the special judges appointed in the framework of the tripartite agreement involving the ILO.

motives of that delinquent act could be related to their union activity, unless the contrary is proven. In many cases, the criminal investigation is focused on looking at the background of the victim and not at the possible motives of the author of the crime. In many cases, this practice impedes the clarification of the events and the identification of the intellectual and material authors. The investigations should be premised on maintaining the dignity of the victims, which does not mean that the facts that distinguish their responsibility should not be clarified. In cases that involve women, in addition to the initial embarrassment, many times the women are forced to endure further

indignities, related to the way that they are interrogated and the way the facts are reconstructed.

Balance of the 187 special cases prioritized by the Attorney General's Office out of the 1.244 cases taken on: 93,5% of the cases remain in a state of impunity

With the signing of the tripartite agreement, it was decided that the Attorney General's Office should prioritize at least 100 cases of anti-union violence. That institution decided to highlight 187 of the 1.244 cases that it has taken on, which have been divided up in the following way, with respect to their date of assignment:

Date of assignment of the priority cases taken on by the Attorney General's Office in the context of the tripartite agreement

State of the assignment of cases	Number of cases
Assigned at the beginning of 2006	121
Assigned before November 21, 2007	43
Assigned at the end of 2007	18
Not yet assigned	5
Total de cases	187

State of the priority cases taken on by the Attorney General's Office in the context of the tripartite agreeme

Current state in the judicial system	Nº de cases
Without identification	3
Preliminary stage	100
Investigative stage	48
Thrown out	1
Inactive	10
Trial stage	8
In preliminary stage with respect to some authors and in trial stage with respect to others	1
In investigative stage with respect to some authors and in trial stage with respect to others	1
In investigative stage with respect to some authors and with guilty verdicts with respect to others.	6
In preliminary stage with respect to some authors and with guilty verdicts with respect to others	6
With guilty verdicts	5
Total	187

The 187 cases prioritized by the Attorney General's Office were classified in the following way:

Type of violation	Nº of cases
Homicides	182
Death threats	2
Forced disappearance	1
Assassination attempts	1

Among the current unresolved cases there are seven in which guilty rulings have been handed down, but these cases have not been able to

be closed due to the ongoing investigations related to other presumed co-authors.

Due to this, we can deduce that in only five cases¹⁴ have guilty sentences been handed down which have allowed the cases to be completely closed. This means that, at the current pace, it would take more than three decades, 36 years to be exact, to overcome impunity in just these 187 priority cases, greatly prejudicing the victims and their need for truth, justice, and reparations.

14. These five cases involve six guilty sentences, since in one case, two authors of the crime were found, to which separate sentences were handed down.

This means that in 93,5% of the 187 priority cases (175 cases), there is still impunity because no type of guilty sentence against those responsible has been handed down.

The special unit of judges, as well as that of prosecutors, should be of a permanent nature, in order to guarantee three things: 1) the independence of these functionaries, 2) the continuity of the investigations and trials, and 3) the integral focus in the investigations and judgments of the actors responsible for assassinations of trade unionists, as these crimes should be considered a genocide, in the sense of being a cohort of actions aimed at completely exterminating the Colombian union movement.

The criminal investigations should take in to account an analysis of the context in which these crimes were committed, understanding anti-union violence as systematic, selective and deliberate. The analysis of individual cases without taking in to consideration facts such as the consolidation of paramilitarism in different regions of the country, the complicity of the State in many of the violations, and the realization of other violations against the same victim even when they are committed by a different actor, do not permit the realization of an efficient investigation.

On the contrary, taking in to account these factors which characterize anti-union violence in Colombia, allows the creation of investigative hypotheses consistent with the type and form of violence that has been perpetrated against unionists. Additionally, the analysis should contain a gender-based outlook which can establish the distinct effects that this violence causes in men and women.

The condition of being a unionist implies that some of the information from these cases comes from union organizations, and this fact should not prejudice the investigation. The condition of being a unionist should also be taken in to account in regards to the activities of the victim during a reasonable period of time and not just at the moment of the violation, so that these acts of violence can be understood to be motivated by their union activities. In addition, people who associate with those who exercise union activities should be considered, whether they are family members or whether they have a different type of relationship with said unionist.

Analyzing some of the rulings handed down by the special judges appointed to try cases of assassinations of unionists, two of these rulings stand out because they depart from what these sentences usually condemn:

1) The case of the unionists from Arauca: In this case, Judge Sanchez condemned the soldiers involved in these assassinations, proving false the version of the facts propagated by the government, which tried to show that the murders were committed as part of a military action between the Army and the guerrilla.

2) The same Judge Sanchez ruled in the case of Luciano Romero, a union leader who was assassinated by paramilitary groups. In this ruling, the judge ordered the opening of an investigation against Nestle because he discovered hints implying the involvement of the corporation in this crime.¹⁵

These are two truly notable cases, one implicating members of the Army and another implicating a multinational corporation. However, it is worrying that this judge, whose rulings have been profound and important, is the only judge whose appointment as a special judge for anti-union violence cases, was not renewed. All indices point to the fact that the failure to renew his appointment was related to the seriousness and effectiveness that he showed in his work performance.

Political analysis and proposals for truth, justice, and reparations for victims of anti-union violence

Widows, orphans, parents, and siblings of unionists victimized due to their condition, participated in the national gathering of union victims from April 13-14 in Barranquilla, as well as in regional gatherings of union victims in places such as the Caribbean coast, Antioquia, and Norte de Santander. These victims agreed upon the following points:

A) Show their concern for the lack of legal, political and social guarantees incorporated in Law 975 of 2005, also known as the “Justice and Peace” law, to protect the rights of victims of anti-union violence and guarantee truth, justice, and reparations.

B) Demonstrate the forms in which Colombian unionists continue to be victimized, through ever more subtle types of violence, as well as denounce the subjectivity of the government in presenting these violations as supposed episodes of common crime and crimes of passion.

C) Denounce the lack of gua-

15. “Colombian judge condemns two paramilitaries and orders the investigation of Nestle and the paramilitary leader “Jorge 40” for the assassination of Luciano Enrique Romero Molina”. Press release, Sinaltrainal- Comité de Solidaridad con Presos Políticos. January 24, 2008.

rantees and support by the national government so that the victims can organize, mobilize, and collectively demand respect for their rights and the end to the impunity in all of their cases.

D) Point out the differences between the treatment given by the government to victims and victimizers, as these differences prove that the victimizers are the real beneficiaries of the Justice and Peace law.

These points form the base of the proposals presented by the victims and

by union confederations such as the CUT, to demand that the government take actions to support and promote their efforts.¹⁶

These same concerns have been compiled as proposals presented by the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) in its document “*The truth, crucial element in the processes of individual and collective reparation, and in the search for guarantees to prevent a repeat of these crimes,*” published in September 2007.

16. Central Unitaria de Trabajadores, (CUT), “The truth, crucial element in the processes of individual and collective reparation, and in the search for guarantees to prevent a repeat of these crimes”, Bogotá., September 2007.

Annexs

1. List of unionists assassinated in Colombia during 2007

Name of the unionist	Abbreviation of the name of the union	Date	Municipality	State	Presumed actor responsible
1. Ruiz Bedoya Daniel	Sigginpec	Jan 9	Itagüí	Antioquia	NI
2. Vanegas Castellanos Jaime	ADEA	Jan 14	Soledad	Atlántico	NI
3. Chicaiza Burbano María Teresa de Jesús	Simana	Jan 15	Ricaurte	Nariño	NI
4. Bedoya Burgos Francisco Leonel	Aimana	Jan 15	Ricaurte	Nariño	NI
5. Campo Medina Arnoldo Enrique	Aducesar	Jan 29	Chiriguaná	Cesar	NI
6. Moreno Marín Luis Fabián	SER	Feb 1	Pereira	Risaralda	NI
7. Cabuyales Díaz William	Sintracabuyales	Feb 28	Cali	Valle	NI
8. Tapia Muñoz Alcira	Asoinca	Mar 21	Popayán	Cauca	NI
9. Silva Reyes María Teres	Asoinca	Mar 28	Satander de Quilichao	Cauca	NI
10. Barajas Carrillo Dubián	ACA-Fensuagro	Apr 18	Fortul	Arauca	NI
11. Abuche Juan Carlos	ACA-Fensuagro	Apr 18	Fortul	Arauca	NI
12. Benavides Víctor Julio	ACA-Fensuagro	Apr 18	Fortul	Arauca	NI
13. Rojas José Jaime	ADE	Apr 19	Bogotá	Bogotá	NI
14. Macías Guaca Miguel Ángel	Asoinca	Apr 22	Caldono	Cauca	NI
15. Gómez Porto Luis Miguel	Aindagricultores	Apr 3	Ovejas	Sucre	NI
16. Madrid Vega Rafael Ramón	Ademacor	Apr 11	Sahagún	Córdoba	NI
17. Melo Rodríguez Ana Silvia	Sindicato Manuela Beltrán de Expendedores de Alimentos	Apr 19	Bogotá	Bogotá	NI
18. Zúñiga Imbachi Bernarda	Asoinca	May 21	Buenos Aires	Cauca	NI
19. Potes Genaro	Aintragrim	May 26	El Castillo	Meta	Army
20. Calderón Villamizar Luis Alfonso	Asinort	Jun 9	Cúcuta	Norte de Santander	NI
21. Berrio de Rodríguez Marleny	AICA	Jun 11	San Vicente del Caguán	Caquetá	NI
22. Gómez Cano Julio César	ADIDA	Jun 23	Medellín	Antioquia	NI
23. Ocoro Balanta Arnovis	Aintraivecali	Jun 1	Suárez	Cauca	NI
24. Robledo González Héctor	Aintrazarzal	Jun 4	Zarzal	Valle del Cauca	NI
25. Villafañe Millán Jesús María	SUTEV	Aug 10	Palmira	Valle	NI
26. Escobar Escobar Andrés	Aducesar	Aug 10	Valledupar	Cesar	NI
27. Ramírez Atehortúa Augusto	ADIDA	Sep 6	Guarne	Antioquia	NI
28. Corena Simón	Fundaprogreso Fensuagro	Sep 10	Orito	Putumayo	Army
29. Yascuarán Pai Gentil	Fundaprogreso Fensuagro	Sep 10	Orito	Putumayo	Army
30. Obando Feliciano	Fundaprogreso Fensuagro	Sep 10	Orito	Putumayo	Army
31. Valencia Correa Jairo Alberto	ADIDA	Sep 12	Medellín	Antioquia	NI
32. Palacios Mosquera Rosalino	ADIDA	Sep 19	Bello	Antioquia	NI
33. Gómez Valencia Luis Fernando	ADEG	Sep 21	San José del Guaviare	Guaviare	NI
34. Arango Alexis	SUTEV	Sep 31	Cali	Valle del Cauca	NI
35. Silva Castro Leonidas	Asinort	Nov 2	Villacaro	Norte de Santander	NI
36. Giraldo Rey Jairo	Sinaltraifrut	Nov 3	Toro	Valle del Cauca	NI
37. Restrepo Campo Mercedes Consuelo	SUTEV	Nov 7	Cartago	Valle del Cauca	NI
38. Marín Vargas José Jesús	Sinaltrainal	Nov 22	Dosquebradas	Risaralda	Paramilitaries
39. Torres Ochoa Luis Alberto	Educal	sep 07	La Dorada	Caldas	NI

Source: SINDERH-ENS

2. The 15 unions most affected by assassinations between 1986-2007, separated by gender

Name of the union	Abbreviation	Number	Gender	
			Female	Male
1. Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria Agropecuaria	Sintrainagro	844*	Female	27
			Male	817
2. Asociación de Institutores de Antioquia	ADIDA	257	Female	53
			Male	204
3. Unión Sindical Obrera	USO	87	Female	0
			Male	87
4. Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores y Empleados de Hospitales, Clínicas, Consultorios y Entidades Dedicadas a la Protección de la Salud	Anthoc	54	Female	23
			Male	31
5. Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Electricidad de Colombia	Sintraelecol	47	Female	1
			Male	46
6. Asociación Nacional de Funcionarios y Empleados de la Rama Judicial	Asonal Judicial	43	Female	6
			Male	37
7. Asociación de Educadores de Córdoba	Ademacor	39	Female	2
			Male	37
8. Asociación de Educadores del Cesar	Aducesar	37	Female	5
			Male	32
9. Sindicato de Educadores de Nariño	Simaná	36	Female	8
			Male	28
10. Asociación de educadores del Arauca	Asedar	33	Female	2
			Male	31
11. Educadores Unidos de Caldas	Educal	32	Female	9
			Male	23
12. Asociación de Institutores Nortesantandereanos	Asinort	31	Female	4
			Male	27
13. Educadores Unidos del Magdalena	Edumag	31	Female	7
			Male	24
14. Sindicato Único Trabajadores de la Educación del Valle	Sutev	28	Female	9
			Male	19
15. Sindicato de Conductores y Taxistas de Cartagena	Sincontaxcar	28	Female	0
			Male	28

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

* In this statistic, we have included assassinations of 108 unionists that belonged to Sintrainagro during 1986-1989 and 24 assassinations of unionists that were members of Sintrabanano during the same time period. These two organizations fused to create Sintrainagro in 1989, the remaining 712 unionists members of Sintrainagro were assassinated during the time period 1989-2007.

3. Total violations to the life, liberty and personal integrity of Colombian unionists from 1986-2007

Type of violation	Number of cases	Percentage
Illegal searches	42	0,5
Death threats	3.667	40,3
Assassination attempts	221	2,4
Forced dissappearances	187	2,1
Forced displacements	1.403	15,4
Arbitrary detentions	565	6,2
Harrassments	227	2,5
Homicides	2.554	28,1
Kidnappings	159	1,7
Torture	69	0,8
Total	9.094	100

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

4. Total homicides against Colombian unionists from 1986-2007, separated by year

Year	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Total
Number of homicides	37	67	78	50	38	83	135	196	104	237	275	2554
Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	
Number of homicides	182	101	80	137	197	186	94	96	70	72	39	

Source: SINDERH-ENS database

5. Violations of the human rights of Colombian unionists from 1986-2007, separated by the presumed actor responsible for the crime

Presumed actor responsible	Number of cases	Percentage
Paramilitaries	1.840	20,2
State entity	444	4,9
Employer	52	0,6
Private security groups	2	0,0
Common criminals	12	0,1
Guerrillas	336	3,7
Not identified	2.497	27,5
No information	3.911	43,0
Total	9.094	100,0

Source: SINDERH-ENS database and trade union confederations

6. Denials of inscriptions in the Union Registry from 2002-2007

Year	Number of denials	Percentage
2000	1	0,24
2001	1	0,24
2002	3	0,71
2003	70	16,55
2004	46	10,87
2005	65	15,37
2006	180	42,55
2007	57	13,48
Total	423	0,00

Source: Ministry of Social Protection

7. Evolution of the number of collective bargaining agreements, collective pacts, and the coverage of collective work contracts from 1994-2006

Year	Collective bargaining agreements	Collective pacts	Union contracts	Total collective work contracts	Total coverage
1994	496	321		817	196.241
1995	517	307		824	230.472
1996	607	334	4	945	258.713
1997	376	257	1	634	203.928
1998	502	252	1	755	125.386
1999	207	172		379	108.744
2000	438	129	4	571	186.963
2001	328	149	6	483	115.153
2002	496	200	4	700	176.774
2003	173	110	1	284	72.244
2004	426	192	2	620	134.244
2005	200	160		360	99.336
2006	285	70		355	60.462

Source: Ministry of Social Protection, tabulation by the ENS

8. Decrees of illegality for work stoppages and strikes from 2002-2007

Period	Not declared illegal	Declared illegal	Total actions
2002	3	12	15
2003	5*	27*	31
2004	8*	15*	20
2005	14*	5*	18
2006	23	6	29
2007	11	1	12
Total	64	66	125

Source: Tabulation by the ENS of statistics from the Ministry of Social Protection

* These decrees include rulings of both illegality and legality in the same document.

9. Summary of acts of anti-union violence based on the testimonies of paramilitaries

Date of testimony	Person giving testimony	Confession
January 16, 2007	Salvatore Mancuso Gómez, alias "Triple Cero" and "Santander Losada" (demobilized member of the Bloque Calima)	Related to the assassinations of Jesús David Corzo Mendoza, Carlos Arturo Pinto Bohórquez, María del Rosario Silva Ríos, Eladio Sierra Vásquez and Aury Sara Marrugo (the latter was President of the Union Sindical Obrera, Cartagena branch) in 2001. He also declared that Carlos Castano had asked an intelligence agent to assassinate him and that he asked alias "El Paisa" to help perpetrate the crime
February 15, 2007	Ever Veloza, alias "HH" (demobilized member of the Bloque Calima).	Testified about the dealings of the multinational corporation Chiquita Brands and its involvement in the armed actions of paramilitaries in Uraba, Antioquia state.

Date of testimony	Person giving testimony	Confession
May 2007	Salvatore Mancuso Gómez, alias “Triple Cero” and “Santander Losada” (demobilized member of the Bloque Calima)	Revealed how companies such as Drummond, Postobón, Bavaria, Hyundai, Carbones del Caribe, Vikingos, Palmicultores del Magdalena, Cafeteros de la Sierra Nevada, Carboneras del Cesar, ECOPETROL and Prodeco; lumber companies such as Pizano, Maderas del Darién and Madereras de la Cuenca del Rio Truandó; transportation companies such as Brasília, Transportadores de Carbón and Copetrán; Chiquita Brands, Dole, Probán, Del Monte, Bancol, Unibán and Sociedad Emilia y Hasbún & Cia., contributed financial resources to the paramilitaries.
May 12, 2007	Juan Francisco Prada alias “Juancho Prada” (demobilized member of the Bloque Julio César Peinado Becerra of the AUC).	Acknowledged his involvement in the assassination of Pablo Antonio Padilla López, Vice-President of the union of Indupalma workers.
June 2007	Edgar Ignacio Fierro Flórez, alias “Don Antonio” (demobilized member of the Bloque Norte of the AUC).	Revealed a plan to exterminate union leaders orchestrated by some high-level functionaries of the DAS together with paramilitaries, exemplified by the assassination of the union leader Alfredo Correa Andreis
June 5, 2007	Alias “El Alemán” (demobilized member of the Bloque Élmer Cárdenas)	Testified about the links between paramilitaries and public administrations in Uraba, Antioquia, the region with the highest levels of anti-union violence in the country.
July 3, 2007	Rodrigo Tovar Pupo, alias “Jorge 40” (demobilized leader of the Bloque Norte of the AUC).	Acknowledged his involvement in the assassination in 2001 of the three union leaders of the Colombian union of Drummond Mining workers Gustavo Soler Mora, Valmore Locarno and Víctor Orcasita.

Date of testimony	Person giving testimony	Confession
July 5, 2007	Nodier Giraldo Giraldo (chief of finances of the Bloque Resistencia Tayrona).	Revealed the financing of paramilitary groups by employers such as Comcel, Club Vacacional Mendihuaca Caribbean Resort and some contractors of Gases del Caribe. Testified about the relationship between the paramilitaries and the multinational corporation Chiquita Brands, which financed the security plan of the paramilitaries in Uraba, Antioquia, as well as about his involvement in the assassination of the union leader Eladio Sierra Vásquez.
	Gian Carlo Gutiérrez Suárez and Pablo Sevillano	Confessed their participation in the crimes against union leaders Carmen Pugo Sánchez, Román Pugo and Freddy armando Rincón.