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Request for Prayer and Action in support of our Sisters and Brothers in Colombia

July 6, 2007

Dear Sisters & Brothers, delegates gathered at Abbotsford and members gathered in Congregations:

Our vision as a covenanted body of congregations affirms God's call for us to become followers of Jesus, and to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace for an express purpose: "...so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world." We have further stated our intent in the priority "to engage the world with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ...we will become a global church." What does it mean to become the "global church?" Tesfatsion Dalellew, MCC Storyteller, shares the phrase that "When a church in India is pinched, the church in North America should say 'ouch.'...The primary thing is for us to be there and identify ourselves with the church and community in their struggles." Recently, the Mennonite Church in Colombia was "pinched" and has called on us, the individuals and congregations of Mennonite Church Canada, to prayer and action in the attached letter.

We invite you as individuals and as congregations to read, to pray, to write to our elected officials via the sample letter provided, and to write words of encouragement, solidarity and hope to the leaders of the the Colombian Mennonite Church.

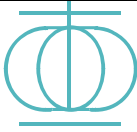

If you would like to send a copy of the letter to your local Member of Parliament (MP), please date, address and sign the attached letter. Mail may be sent postage-free to any MP at the following address:

House of Commons
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
K1A 0A6

On behalf of Mennonite Church Canada, additional letters have been sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other Canadian officials responsible for Canada-Colombia relations.

So that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world,

Tim Froese
Executive Director, International Ministries
Mennonite Church Canada Witness

	
Iglesia Cristiana Menonita de Colombia	Centro Cristiano para Justicia, Paz y Acción Noviolenta - Justapaz

“We are like clay jars in which this treasure is stored. The real power comes from God and not from us. We often suffer, but we are never crushed. Even when we don’t know what to do, we never give up. In times of trouble, God is with us, and when we are knocked down, we get up again. We face death every day because of Jesus. Our bodies show what his death was like, so that his life can also be seen in us. (2 Cor. 4: 7-11)

Dear Sisters and Brothers;

We want to inform you that before dawn on Thursday, June, 14, 2007, unknown persons broke into the office of Justapaz, a program of the Mennonite Church of Colombia. They specifically stole two key computers containing sensitive information on people and churches of various denominations that are working for peace, and also on church people who are victims and witnesses to human rights violations by the illegal and legal armed parties to the Colombian conflict. This type of violation fits a pattern that has been observed in attacks on organizations that work for peace and human dignity. There is concern that the stolen information will lead to increased risk to persons and churches whose experiences are documented. It is also significant that this attack was carried out against the church.

The attached letter provides additional information and gives recommendations for action.

As Justapaz and the Mennonite Church we undertake work in nonviolence, justice and peacebuilding as an expression of our understanding of the calling to the church to follow Jesus in the Colombian context. We ask that you stand with us by sharing this information with your congregations and with others as you deem convenient, and by praying not only for Justapaz but for all the individuals, churches and organizations that continue in the task of announcing peace.

We also encourage you in your own commitments to be salt and light, and to live in the blessing of being peacemakers and messengers of the Gospel of salvation and reconciliation of our Lord.

Your sisters in Christ,

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