

Under the plan, the Colombian Government is supposed to be providing expanded physical protections for union activists. I met with regional and national union leaders last month who told me that little has changed on the ground. They told me they haven't received protection.

The action plan calls for hiring additional labor inspectors over the next 4 years to enforce these new laws. There's a program to relocate teachers who have received death threats. There is a program to address the backlog of thousands of union homicide cases that have yet to be prosecuted. And there is no assurance that the actions will be carried out.

Last week, the Ways and Means Republicans opposed efforts to require Colombia to meet its obligations under the action plan as of the date the free trade agreement goes into force. Without this provision, the U.S. has no leverage to assure implementation of the labor action plan. Maybe that is what the multinational corporations pushing this deal want. And since the agreement is being brought to the floor under fast track, Congress will not be able to consider amendments to make the action plan enforceable.

Given this predicament, the least the administration can do is to stand behind its own action plan. The implementing legislation should require Colombia to fully comply with the plan before the agreement takes effect. The administration should confirm that compliance through on-the-ground consultations with labor and human rights organizations. Without real change on the ground, this trade agreement is not fair to Colombian workers. They deserve their basic right not to be subjected to threats and murder because they demand a better life.

This agreement does not fairly represent our Nation's values, and it's fundamentally unfair to America's workers. They can't compete with workers who face death squads for wanting better working conditions. They can't compete with a country that continues to allow thousands of assassins to operate with impunity. It's past time that we, as a Nation, stand up for American values and American workers.

REMEMBERING FORMER FIRST LADY BETTY FORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great American with a legacy of being a passionate advocate for the issues that she believed in.

Former First Lady Betty Ford passed away earlier this week at the age of 93. She was known as a beacon of warmth and kindness. She was also a tough lady. She's being buried today next to her husband, Jerry Ford, in Grand Rapids at the Presidential museum.

My entire family and I had opportunities to meet her over the years, and

I have to say, it's truly an honor now to represent part of the district that Jerry Ford had so long served in this very House.

□ 1020

We are all deeply saddened by her passing. Mrs. Ford cared deeply about others, as evidenced in her work helping people through their addiction and recovery from chemical dependency through the Betty Ford Clinic, and her work to raise awareness of breast cancer and many other issues, all at a time when those things really were not discussed much in public.

Above all, she led the Ford team as she supported her husband's service to a Nation with admirable love and mutual respect, at times literally being his voice, like she did that evening that he made his concession speech in 1976.

Well, this spring, at the dedication ceremony of the statue of President Ford here in the Rotunda lying just beyond, we were reminded of his calm, steady leadership, and his ability to reach out to others. They were always a team. And it was as much a tribute to her as it was to President Ford.

Again, we continue to pray for the Ford children, Susan, Jack, Mike, and Steve, and the entire Ford family as we pay tribute to their mother and the legacy that she leaves behind.

Rest well, Mrs. Ford, rest well.

COLOMBIA: DEMAND RESULTS ON LABOR AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, 6 days ago, on Friday, July 1, armed men assassinated a candidate for the city council of Caldas, a town just outside of Medellin, Colombia. He was the ninth local candidate murdered over the last few months.

Last Thursday, June 30, Luis Eduardo Gomez, a Colombian journalist and witness for a high profile investigation into links between Colombian politicians and paramilitary groups, was shot down and killed in northwestern Antioquia, an area I visited first in 2001. Gomez was 70 years old. He was returning home at night with his wife when he was gunned down. He was murdered a few days after another witness in the case was killed. And investigators for the Attorney General have said several other witnesses have disappeared.

Antonio Mendoza Morales was a councilman in the Caribbean town of San Onofre, Sucre. The 34-year-old Mendoza was also a leader of the Association of Displaced Persons of San Onofre and the Montes de Maria. He was also shot and killed last Thursday night. He is at least the 11th land claims, victims' rights, or displaced persons leader to have been killed in Colombia so far this year.

Displaced persons and victims' rights advocates in the Sucre region received a series of death threats during the month of June. We don't know yet whether Mendoza's killing is related to these threats. But I traveled to Sucre in 2003, and can attest to the daily violence suffered by local leaders and displaced persons and campesino organizations.

On June 7, Anna Fabricia Cordoba, 51, a leader of the displaced and a land rights activist, was shot dead by an unidentified gunman while riding on a bus in Medellin. She had fled her home in northern Antioquia in 2001 after several of her family members were killed. She had been campaigning for the restitution of lands to Colombia's displaced, and was a member of Ruta Pacifica, the Peaceful Path, a women's organization calling for a negotiated end to the war. In 2008, Ruta Pacifica testified before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission about Colombia's internally displaced. Cordoba, an Afro-Colombian, had been receiving death threats for months. She had asked the Colombian Government for protection, but had not received any. Her children have received death threats following their mother's death.

The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights condemned Cordoba's murder and expressed alarm over the increase in serious threats against Colombian human rights defenders. The situation is getting worse. Every day I receive news about threats, murders, and disappearances of Colombian labor and human rights activists and community leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I recite this sad litany of recent murders to impress upon my colleagues that these are real people, real leaders, being murdered every single day in Colombia. Will their murderers be brought to justice or will their deaths be just one more case that remains in impunity? Will the government's promises to their families to seek justice be fulfilled? Will other threatened leaders and their families receive real protection? I hope so, but we simply don't know yet. Promises are easy. Results take time, commitment, and political will to achieve.

This morning, some of my colleagues will describe the dangers facing Colombia's labor activists. Colombia still remains the most dangerous place in the world to be a unionist. But violence against Colombia's workers happens in the context of a very threatening landscape for anyone who has the courage to organize their communities, run for public office, or stand up for the rights of the poor, the displaced, and the victims of human rights abuse. The source of violence are all the illegal armed actors, the FARC, the ELN, the paramilitaries, and criminal networks known as BACRIM. And also, sadly, it includes members and units of the Colombian military and police.

Before any trade agreement is brought to the Congress for a vote, we owe it to the brave people of Colombia

to give the Santos administration time to demonstrate that it can carry out the historic reforms that it has announced as its priorities. We need time to see if the initial steps required by the U.S.-Colombia Labor Action Plan actually result in changes on the ground inside Colombia. Will workers be able to exercise their rights, organize freely, and bargain directly with their employers without the fear of death? And we need time to determine whether violence against rights defenders and community leaders is actually reduced under the leadership of President Santos, and whether greater protections are provided and prove to be effective.

We need to see, and we should demand to see, results on the ground before Congress takes up the free trade agreement. Let's use whatever leverage the U.S. has in Colombia to help end a culture of impunity and violence that by any standard is intolerable. I cannot approve an FTA on the basis of good intentions. It must be based on results.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me just say trade agreements should be about lifting people up, not keeping them down.

11 COLOMBIAN LAND RIGHTS, VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND DISPLACED LEADERS MURDERED IN 2011 (6/30/11)

February 4

Ana M. Hernández. Assassinated with her 10 year old son. Community Board member of El Cupadero en Frontino (Antioquia). She was killed in front of her 3 children.

March 6

Zoraida Acevedo. Leader of Familias en Acción en Tibú (Norte de Santander). She was shot in front of her husband and her four children.

March 19

Hernán Pinto, victims' rights leader in Cundinamarca, he was murdered brutally, clubbed and stoned to death. Sources say the perpetrators were the FARC.

March 22

Bernardo Ríos Londoño, 27, member of the San José de Apartadó Peace Community, in the Urabá region of northwestern Antioquia.

March 23

David Góez and Éver Verbel. Goez was assassinated near a commercial center in Medellín. Verbel was killed in San Onofre (Sucre).

April 7

Andrés Álvarez Orozco. Campesino leader of Antioquia who had denounced irregular actions by the Public Forces (pólice) in this región.

April 15

Hugo Ulcué. Assassinated when leaving an event in Cauca. He was an indigenous leader who had called for reparations for the massacre of the Naya people.

April 27

Martha Gaibao. Leader on land rights and restitution for six communities in Southern Córdoba. She was assassinated as she arrived at her home.

June 7

Ana Fabricia Córdoba Cabral, 51, member of Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres and founder of the Association of Leaders Moving Forward for a Human Fabric of Peace/LATEPAZ. Murdered by gunman on motorcycle while she was riding on a bus in Medellín.

June 30

Antonio Medoza Morales, councilman in San Onofre (Sucre) and leader of the Associa-

tion of Displaced Persons of San Onofre and the Montes de Maria. Shot and killed at a billiard hall near his home.

Sources: El Tiempo (Bogotá, Colombia) 6/8/11; 6/20/11; and 7/1/11.

[From the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Organization of American States, June 20, 2011]

IACHR CONDEMNS MURDER OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER NEW THREATS TO HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN COLOMBIA

WASHINGTON, DC.—The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) condemns the murder in Colombia of Ana Fabricia Córdoba Cabrera, an Afro-descendant community leader who worked with displaced persons seeking the restitution of lands in the Urabá region. The Commission also expresses its deep concern over a new death threat targeting human rights defenders and organizations.

According to the information the IACHR has received, Ana Fabricia Córdoba was a member of the organization Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres (Women's Peaceful Path) and a founder of the Asociación Líderes Hacia delante por un Tejido Humano de Paz (Association of Leaders Moving Forward for a Human Fabric of Peace, LATEPAZ), whose mission is to support victims of forced displacement. Ana Fabricia Córdoba Cabrera had allegedly reported a number of cases in which rights of displaced persons had been violated by paramilitaries in the Medellín neighborhoods of La Cruz and La Honda. The information indicates that on June 7, a man shot the community leader with a firearm while she was traveling on a bus on her way to Santa Cruz. The IACHR is deeply concerned that Colombian government authorities have admitted publicly that the murder of Ana Fabricia Córdoba could have been averted, since the Ministry of the Interior's Protection Program had reportedly known about threats against the community leader since May 9 but had failed to implement protection measures in a timely manner.

According to the information available, days before the murder, dozens of organizations that work to defend the rights of the displaced population—including Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres, to which the human rights defender belonged—received a death threat dated June 2. It was signed by the armed group "Rastrojos" and targeted those who had played an active role in the framework of Colombia's Victims and Land Restitution Law, passed on Friday, June 10. The organizations targeted by the threat include CREAR, Arco Iris, Fundación Social, Sisma Mujer, Red de Empoderamiento, Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo, FUNDEPAZ, Casa Mujer, Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres, FUNDHEFEM, CODHES, FUNDEMUD, MOVICE, UNIPA, and Fundación Nuevo Amanecer. The threat also mentioned several individuals by name, including Viviana Ortiz, Angélica Bello, Ruby Castaño, María Eugenia Cruz, Piedad Córdoba, Lorena Guerra, and Iván Cepeda. Members of several of the aforementioned organizations as well as several of those named individually in the threat are beneficiaries of precautionary measures granted by the IACHR. The Commission also observes with concern that the document signed by "the Rastrojos" threatens the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Commission reiterates that one of the first steps to effectively protect human rights defenders is to publicly recognize the legitimacy of their work and to take steps to protect them from the moment the public

authorities learn that they have received threats due to their work. The Commission brings to mind that in many cases, such as with Ana Fabricia Córdoba, the death of human rights defenders is preceded by threats that were reported to the authorities.

The Commission urges the State to guarantee the right to life, integrity, and security of Ana Fabricia Córdoba's family members, investigate what occurred, and punish those responsible for her murder. The Commission also urges the State of Colombia to immediately and urgently adopt any necessary measures to guarantee the right to life, integrity, and security of human rights defenders, especially the organizations and individuals who have been threatened. The State should carry out a comprehensive and systematic investigation of the threat with respect to all the organizations and individuals named therein.

The Commission reiterates that the work of human rights defenders is critical to building a solid, lasting democratic society and to fully attaining the rule of law. In this regard, acts of violence and other attacks against human rights defenders impinge on the essential role they play in society and contribute to the vulnerability of those whose rights they are working to defend.

A principal, autonomous body of the Organization of American States (OAS), the IACHR derives its mandate from the OAS Charter and the American Convention on Human Rights. The Inter-American Commission has a mandate to promote respect for human rights in the region and acts as a consultative body to the OAS in this matter. The Commission is composed of seven independent members who are elected in a personal capacity by the OAS General Assembly and who do not represent their countries of origin or residence.

[From the Committee to Protect Journalists, July 5, 2011]

PROVINCIAL JOURNALIST SHOT TO DEATH IN COLOMBIA

NEW YORK.—Luis Eduardo Gómez, a Colombian freelance journalist who was a witness for an investigation into links between politicians and paramilitary groups, was shot and killed on Thursday in the town of Arboletes, in the northwestern province of Antioquia, according to news reports. The Committee to Protect Journalists called on Colombian authorities today to thoroughly investigate his murder and bring those responsible to justice.

Gómez, 70, was returning home at night with his wife when he was gunned down by unidentified assailants who fled the scene on a motorcycle, according to local press reports. Gomez had reported on local corruption and links among politicians and illegal right-wing paramilitary groups in the Urabá region of Antioquia, the Colombian press freedom group Foundation for Press Freedom (FLIP) said. Most recently, he had written about tourism and the environment for the newspapers El Heraldo de Urabá and Urabá al día, among others, the Colombian press said.

According to the newspaper El Colombiano, the journalist had not received any threats prior to his death.

Gómez was participating as a witness in the attorney general's investigation of links between politicians and right-wing paramilitary groups, a scandal known as "parapolitics." Another witness in the case was killed a few days before the journalist's death, and investigators said other witnesses have disappeared, according to press reports. Gómez was also investigating the unsolved murder of his son, who was also his professional collaborator, and was killed two years ago, the daily El Espectador said.

"We urge Colombian authorities to fully investigate the murder of freelance reporter Luis Eduardo Gómez, establish whether he was killed for his work, and bring those responsible to justice," said Carlos Lauria, CPJ's senior program coordinator for the Americas. "Colombia has made progress recently in its fight against impunity in journalist murders. It must not allow this new killing to set its progress back."

The parapolitics scandal broke in late 2006, after the weekly newsmagazine *Semana* published a series of investigative pieces that forced Colombian authorities to examine the alleged associations. Dozens of former and current members of Congress have been detained or investigated since 2007, the press said.

The Urabá region of Antioquia province has been marked by violence for some time and was controlled for many years (until 2006) by the paramilitary group the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), press reports said. Colombian provincial journalists, working in areas where paramilitaries and other illegal armed groups are prevalent, face challenges in trying to report on the organizations' activities, CPJ research shows.

With 43 journalists killed for their work since 1992, Colombia has historically been one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists, CPJ research shows. However, CPJ's Impunity Index has showed that over the past four years the country is improving its record, as anti-press violence has slowed and authorities have had some success in prosecuting journalist murders.

DEBT CEILING/JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. NUNNELEE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, last week we learned that the economy added a meager 18,000 jobs and the unemployment rate went up to 9.2 percent, far from the 6.7 percent that President Obama claimed it would be today if the stimulus bill had been signed into law. Far too many Americans are looking for jobs. Yet the President insists that tax increases are the way to fix Washington's spending problem. Tax hikes that will destroy jobs and destroy the confidence that our job creators need to hire new employees. To keep American jobs here we don't need to raise taxes. We do need to get our fiscal house in order.

Twenty-two million Americans search daily for full-time work, the worst sustained unemployment streak since the Great Depression. To these Americans, there is no end in sight. For them, unemployment's not a rate, it's a reality. Our job crisis has everything to do with our spending crisis and our debt crisis.

If we hit the August 2 deadline, the United States Government will face what many Americans have felt: Too much month left at the end of our money. We simply won't have enough money to pay our bills. Americans have had to make that decision time and time again. At the end of the month, they have to decide what to pay first—the mortgage, the electric bill, the grocery bill, or the car payment.

Now, I will be very disappointed if, in making those decisions, the administration chooses to play politics. We need to make sure we pay Social Security, interest on the debt, Medicare, and our troops that are standing in harm's way. The American people want real solutions, and the House of Representatives has committed to a long-term plan. We voted for a budget that would make Washington start living within its means. Even the President's own chief of staff has said that in 5 years Medicare is going broke.

However, it's been 800 days since our friends in the Senate have passed a budget. And they have nine House-passed jobs bills sitting in their hands, but they refuse to act on any of them.

A recent poll shows that only 17 percent of mothers believe that their children will have a better life in the future. At every townhall meeting I ask participants whether they think their grandchildren will live a better quality of life than they live. The response is slim.

If Congress is going to be asked to raise the debt ceiling, we must have a long-term plan to fix Washington's spending problem. House Republicans have made our demands clear. We will not raise the debt ceiling without spending cuts larger than an increase in the debt ceiling. We will not raise the debt ceiling without structural reforms that restrain further spending and guarantee that we don't get into this mess again. And I am not interested in a temporary band-aid. We have already voted "no" on raising our debt limit without significant cuts and reforms.

□ 1030

We will not support a plan that raises taxes on hardworking Americans. We didn't get into this problem because taxes are too low. We are in this situation because of runaway spending and the failed economic policies of this administration.

We need to move forward and solve this crisis in a responsible way.

HONORING FREDRICK DOUGLAS WILLIAMS III

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the accomplishments of Mr. Frederick Douglas Williams III of Selma, Alabama, a great American and a trailblazing Alabamian.

After more than 50 years in the floral business, Mr. Fred D. Williams III retired on June 30, 2011. A fixture in the Selma community for more than five decades, Fred Williams has provided his floral expertise to countless families for weddings, funerals, graduations and other special occasions in the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama and throughout the Southeast. Fred's Flower and Gift Shop opened on Octo-

ber 15, 1956, and served as a vital part of the Selma community.

Fred Williams comes from a family of public servants and entrepreneurs. His parents were pillars in the City of Selma and served as role models for the entire community. His mother, Ms. Mary Ellen Richardson Williams, was a beloved educator; and his father, Fred D. Williams, Jr., was a wise and generous business owner. His father owned J.H. Williams & Sons Funeral Home, established in 1905 and still in operation today in Selma, Alabama. The Williams family were pioneers in a time when African American businesses were few or nonexistent. The opening of Fred's Flower and Gift Shop was an extension of his family legacy.

Fred Williams spent most of his formative years in Selma. He moved with his family to Richmond, Virginia, in the 1950s where he graduated from Maggie L. Walker High School. He then went on to attend the historic Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. After graduation, he returned to his hometown of Selma and opened his flower shop in 1956.

For 45 years, Fred Williams was married to Martha J. Williams, who passed away on July 15, 2003. Their marriage was blessed with two children: Kay Frances Williams, who is married to Earl Johnson of Alexandria, Virginia; and Kimberly Joyce Williams, who is married to John Dylan of Bloomington, Minnesota. He has two beautiful granddaughters: McKenzie, who is 13; and Madison, who is 7.

For over 50 years, as Selma's premier florist, Fred Williams shared his creative genius, creating exquisite floral arrangements, providing supreme service to his loyal customers, and serving as an inspiration to all small businesses. Fred Williams is loved, admired, and highly respected by the entire Selma community, and I am honored to call him "Uncle Fred." His retirement will be a great loss to the business community, but I know that his commitment to bettering Selma will remain unwavering.

On a personal note, I grew up in the Williams household, and his daughter Kim and I were childhood best friends. In fact, there is not a childhood memory that I have that does not include the Williams family or my many visits to Fred's Florist. Because of the closeness of my family that we shared with the Williams family over these many years, I have always affectionately known him as "Uncle Fred."

Through his business and philanthropy, Uncle Fred has made an indelible mark on the community in Selma, Alabama, and I am extremely grateful for the part that he played in raising me. I would like to sincerely thank him for his fortitude and over 50 years of service. The community of Selma and the State of Alabama appreciates your public service and commitment to business excellence.