

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 220

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the continued attacks on democracy and the rule of law in Colombia, including the kidnappings of the elected representatives of the people of Colombia.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 7, 2002

Mr. GRASSLEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the continued attacks on democracy and the rule of law in Colombia, including the kidnappings of the elected representatives of the people of Colombia.

Whereas Colombia is home to the oldest democracy in Latin America and has consistently been a friend of the United States;

Whereas Colombia has been affected by the violence generated by the terrorist acts of illegal armed groups;

Whereas the largest of these groups, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), has used kidnapping, extortion, terrorism, and narcotics trafficking to raise money for its activities;

Whereas those most affected by the targets of these activities have been the people of Colombia;

Whereas in October 1997, almost 10,000,000 Colombians voted for a mandate for peace that asked all presidential candidates to find peace in Colombia through political negotiation;

Whereas in June 1998, 6,500,000 Colombians voted for President Andres Pastrana and his project for peace in Colombia;

Whereas, since his election, President Pastrana has worked consistently and persistently to find a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict between the Government of Colombia and the insurgency groups operating within the borders of Colombia;

Whereas the Government of Colombia put forth several proposals for peace and made sacrifices in sovereign territory and commitments in funding in hopes of achieving peace in Colombia only to have these overtures repeatedly rejected;

Whereas, on January 20, 2002, the Government of Colombia and the FARC were able to agree on a schedule to be followed in order to define the future of the peace process;

Whereas, since this accord was signed by the FARC, the FARC has consistently and repeatedly taken violent actions against the people and the Government of Colombia in the form of terrorist attacks, including—

- (1) car bombs;
- (2) attacking government installations;
- (3) mining new fields;

- (4) homicides, including women and children;
- (5) destroying electric pylons;
- (6) bombing oil pipelines;
- (7) destroying bridges; and
- (8) attacks on the dam that provides water to Bogota;

Whereas five democratically elected representatives of the Colombian Congress are currently being held against their will after being kidnapped by the FARC, including—

- (1) Representative Oscar Tilio Lizcano, a member of the Conservative Party and elected by the people of Colombia to represent the Province of Caldas, who was kidnapped in the municipality of Riosucio, Province of Caldas, on August 5, 2000, by members of the “Aurelio Rodriguez Front” of the “Jose Maria Cordoba Block” of the FARC;
- (2) Senator Luis Eladio Perez, a member of the Liberal Party and elected by the people of Colombia, while visiting several municipalities on a political tour who was kidnapped in the town of Ipiales, Province of Nariflo, on June 10, 2001, by elements of the FARC, as a second attempt to kidnap Senator Eladio, the first occurring at the end of May 2001, and frustrated by his security detail;
- (3) Representative Orlando Beltran Cuellar, a member of the Liberal party from the Province of Huila and

elected by the people of Colombia, who was kidnapped by the FARC in the municipality of Gigante, Province of Huila, on August 28, 2001;

(4) Representative Consuelo Gonzalez de Perdomo, a member of the Liberal Party from the Province of Huila and elected by the people of Colombia, who was kidnapped by the FARC in the municipality of Hobo, Province of Huila, on September 11, 2001; and

(5) Senator Jorge Eduardo Gechem Turbay, a member of the Liberal Party from the Province of Huila, elected by the people of Colombia, and President of the Colombian Senate's Peace Commission, who was kidnapped on February 20, 2002, when four members of the FARC hijacked a commercial AIRES aircraft traveling from Neiva to Bogota with 30 passengers on board and who was removed from the aircraft after it was forced to land on a rural road in the municipality of Hobo, Province of Huila; and

Whereas Saturday, February 23, Presidential Candidate Ingrid Betancourt and her campaign manager Clara Rojas were kidnapped by the FARC as she traveled to San Vicente del Caguán; Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses its strong support for the demo-
3 cratically elected Government of Colombia and the
4 Colombian people in their struggle to protect their

1 democracy from terrorism and the scourge of illicit
2 narcotics;

3 (2) deplores the continuing criminal terrorist
4 acts of murder, abduction, and extortion carried out
5 by all illegal armed groups in Colombia against the
6 civilian population of Colombia and Colombian au-
7 thorities;

8 (3) condemns the kidnapping of elected rep-
9 resentatives of the people of Colombia by the FARC
10 and extends its sympathy to the families and friends
11 of the kidnapped members of the Colombian Con-
12 gress; and

13 (4) urges the President to develop a comprehen-
14 sive strategic policy proposal, consistent with United
15 States law regarding human rights and the environ-
16 ment, to assist the Government of Colombia in de-
17 fending its democracy and rule of law from illegal
18 armed groups and the scourge of illicit narcotics.

○