

## Letter of Support from the Colombian Mennonite Church for Hector Mondragón

The Colombian Mennonite Church has more than 60 years of a nonviolent testimony of service to this country in search of peace and well-being for Colombia. At the global level, for nearly 500 years the Mennonite Church has been teaching and practicing nonviolence and opposition to every type of war, recruitment from armed groups, and violence of every kind.

The brief history above shows that this is the teaching that is given to the members and to anyone who is willing to listen, and this is the commitment that our members assume.

Héctor H. Mondragón has been a member of our church since 1994, that is, 14 years. We have known him as a Christian not only committed to the cause of Jesus Christ, but also to Jesus' teaching and example of nonviolent love. As a person dedicated full time, both as an investigator and advisor, to the cause of the poor, in particular the indigenous and peasants of our country, brother Mondragón has worked in support of the church in favor of justice for these groups of people, particularly in relation to possession of land. But always from the perspective of nonviolence. His positions towards the government as well as toward the insurgent groups have been clear.

Because of this, we are very concerned about the attempt to link him, through the Raul Reyes' computer, to alias Sara and to the FARC through a national newspaper article. The timing of this development seems to us clumsily "coincidental," just before a planned speaking tour in the United States in order to explain the implications of and concerns about the free trade agreement with that country for the great majority of Colombians. Brother Mondragón could not travel on his tour. On the other hand, Colombians interested in seeing the FTA approved were able to make their visit to the United States this month. This fact makes us feel there is an evident lack of fair play in the democratic debate surrounding this issue.

We want to signal that the Colombian Mennonite Church rejects any attempt to link one of our members – and in this particular case Héctor H. Mondragón – to any armed group or any violent practice or to slander his/her name, as we all know, also is extremely dangerous for the life and security of any person in this context.

We hope with this to emphasize our position of support for brother Mondragón for the peace of anyone or any group who might have been confused with such news. At the same time, we ask for support both at the national and international level to defend the good name and to ensure his security.

We do not doubt that the truth will ultimately triumph and the cause of God's justice for the poor of the earth as well. Also, we believe that God will vindicate the righteous, and we invoke the words of Jesus: *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled and Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God, and Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.*

We also call on those who represent a different position than us, those who continue to use weapons to achieve their ends, including the governing class of our country to reflection, repentance and change, with our sights on opening paths to peace and well-being for Colombia, because we believe in the possibility of conversion and new courses.

Thank you for your solidarity and support in this difficult time.

Cordially,

Alix Lozano, President  
Christian Mennonite Church of Colombian