

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO COLOMBIA- ADDENDUM

DENMARK

- Reliable reports indicate [widespread] use of torture and ill treatment. What further steps are you taking to prevent and eliminate torture? When do you intend to ratify OPCAT?
- In a recent report (September 2008) the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has reported several cases of death threats to members of various trade unions. What does the Colombian Government intend to do to stop these threats in general and – more specifically – to protect the trade union leaders from being murdered because of their affiliation with the unions?
- According to a recent report (October 2008) by Amnesty International a large number of civilians are still falling victim to human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by all parties involved in the armed conflict in Colombia. What does the Colombian Government intend to do to resolve the situation and to ensure that human rights are enforced and respected in Colombia in order to protect civilians?

GERMANY

- Regarding the latest developments concerning extrajudicial executions by the Colombian armed forces, Germany welcomes the consequences drawn by the government and would like to know how exactly the government's plans to ensure that the prohibition of extrajudicial executions is enforced on an operative level.

NETHERLANDS

- The emergence of new illegal armed groups are of great concern, as are changes in strategy of some of the old ones, such as the FARC, that decided to start using even more antipersonnel mines. What is your policy to curb the influence of these illegal armed groups on the civilian population?
- We have all been shocked by the recent news on the so called extrajudicial executions. We have been impressed with the extent of the initial measures taken by your government in this regard, such as the dismissal of a large number of officers. Could you tell us what the plans of the Colombian authorities are with respect to investigation and persecutions of the crimes committed and with respect to prevention?
- As we are aware, you have made substantial improvements in the fight against impunity. Could you elaborate on the indicators on a basic level: number of accusations, number of investigations, number of trials and number of convictions?

SWEDEN

- Reports show that human rights defenders, union activists and journalists are being threatened, abducted and in some cases even killed in Colombia. What measures is the government of Colombia taking to guarantee the human rights defenders to pursue their work under safe and secure conditions? What measures are taken to effectively investigate and bring to justice perpetrators of the high number of enforced disappearances and kidnappings in the country?
- Civil society is an important actor in the efforts to strengthen human rights in Colombia. The fact that the Government of Colombia has followed OHCHR's recommendation to draw up a National Action Plan on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law with the broad participation of civil society actors is therefore an important measure, although there have been obstacles in the process. How does the Government of Colombia foresee that it will work to overcome the difficulties between the actors in this process and complete the work in accordance with OHCHR's recommendation?
- Sweden welcomes the Government's efforts to bring an end to the extrajudicial killings being committed by the illegal armed groups as well as in some cases the military. At the same time, serious breaches of international humanitarian law continue to be committed by paramilitary groups and guerrilla organisations. What further measures will the Government of Colombia take to deepen and also make more efficient the investigations of the extrajudicial killings committed by the military and stem other ongoing violations of international humanitarian law?
