

New York, 26 September 2007

**Dr. Rafael Correa Delgado**  
**PRESIDENT**  
**REPUBLIC of ECUADOR**

Dear President Correa:

We write to you to express our strong support for your actions to demilitarize Ecuador's relations with the United States, including the decision to close the U.S.-operated military base in Manta, known as a Forward Operating Location (FOL), when the agreement for it expires in 2009.

U.S. officials have defended the Manta base, asserting that drug traffic in Ecuador and the eastern Pacific has grown in recent years.<sup>1</sup> But if drug traffic has grown since the base began operations in Manta in 2000, it suggests – at the very least – that it has been ineffective. The FOL commander has also stated that the base is “very important” for Plan Colombia, which is described as a counter-drug program. But Plan Colombia's military emphasis, its inaction against drug trafficking by paramilitary groups allied with the Colombian army, and its trivial impacts on the amount of coca leaf grown indicate that it is more accurately described as a plan for war – war that has displaced millions of Colombian civilians and killed many thousands. A U.S. military base in Ecuador helps neither of our countries.

The militarized approach to reducing traffic of illegal drugs represents a tragic decision that has not affected the availability or price of these drugs in our communities, nor addressed the poverty and lack of infrastructure that lead some Latin American farmers to enter the illegal economy. A study by the Rand Corporation showed that spending on interdiction of the sort conducted from the Manta base is 23 times less effective in reducing illegal drug use than treatment of drug users.<sup>2</sup> To paraphrase President Dwight Eisenhower, every dollar spent on military approaches to drugs represents a theft from programs for at-risk youth in the United States, for investment in reducing the United States' carbon emissions, and for payment of other debts our country owes to the world.

We applaud your administration's publicly stated decision to not renew the agreement for the FOL in Manta, and to withdraw from the UNITAS naval exercises that were held in June, led by the U.S. military. In the absence of any credible external military threat to the region and the ineffectiveness of military actions in stemming the supply of illegal drugs, these exercises serve only to militarize the seas, waste resources, and antagonize peaceful international relations.

We represent U.S. sectors concerned not only about the U.S. military base in Manta, but also about other ways the U.S. government violates Ecuador's and other Latin American nations' sovereignty through military intervention. We are working to shut down the U.S. Army's Western Hemispheric Institute of Security Cooperation, also known as the School of the Americas, by cutting funding in the U.S. and urging progressive Latin American governments to send no more troops to train at that Institute, which has a long and persistent history of training soldiers who later commit human rights atrocities, and of inviting officers who already have such histories to serve as instructors.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Ecuador's Divided Loyalties,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> C. Peter Rydell and Susan S. Everingham, “Controlling Cocaine: Supply Versus Demand Programs,” prepared for the Office of National Drug Control Policy, 1994.

We also want to highlight other ways in which the U.S. government seeks to maintain control of Latin American military and police forces, including the 2005 opening of negotiations for another “International Law Enforcement Academy” (ILEA) to “train” all of Latin America<sup>3</sup>. We do not believe the United States has a place in teaching other nations the practice of war or policing, while its government is blatantly violating international law and refusing to ratify international pacts that could protect civilian populations and sovereign nations from further violence, such as the Rome Statute for the creation of the International Criminal Court. That is why we are working to change U.S. military policy.

In the struggle to demilitarize our country’s relations with yours, you may count on us. We look forward to further dialogue with you on these issues.

Sincerely,

### National Organizations

Chuck Kaufman, *Director*  
**Alliance for Global Justice**

Angela Berryman, *Director*  
Peacebuilding Unit  
**American Friends Service Committee**

Jon Hunt, *National Coordinator*  
**Campaign for Labor Rights**

Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans, *Cofounders*  
**CODEPINK**

Burke Stansburry, Elizabeth Velasquez and Krista Hanson,  
**Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)**

### **Fellowship of Reconciliation**

Kirsten Moller, *Executive Director*  
**Global Exchange**

### **Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns**

Jennifer DeLury Ciplet  
*Executive Director*  
**Network in Solidarity with Guatemala**

Katherine Hoyt  
*National Co-Coordinator*  
**Nicaragua Network**

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/ilea/c11286.htm>

Andrés Thomas Conteris  
*Director, Program on the Americas*  
**Nonviolence International**

**School of the Americas Watch**

**United for Peace and Justice**

James E. Winkler, *General Secretary*  
**General Board of Church and Society**  
**United Methodist Church**

Al Marder, *President*  
**United States Peace Council**

**United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America**

Banbose Shango  
*Regional Coordinator*  
**Venezuela Solidarity Network**

Chris Morin, *President*  
**Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, United States Section**

Local/Regional Organizations

Stan Haste  
*Minister for Mission and Ecumenism*  
**Alliance of Baptists**

**Bend-Condega Friendship Project**

**Boston CISPES**

**Casa Baltimore/Limay**

**Central American Association of Beckley, West Virginia**

Father Joseph Mulligan, S.J.  
**Christian Base Communities of Nicaragua**

**Community Action on Latin America**  
Madison, WI

**Committee in Solidarity with the Central American People (CISCAP)**  
Eugene, OR

**DeKalb Interfaith Network for Peace and Justice, DeKalb IL**

**Hilton Head for Peace**  
Hilton Head SC

**Latin American Solidarity Committee, Buffalo, N.Y**

Dale Sorensen, *Executive Director*  
**Marin Interfaith Task Force**

**New Jersey Peace Council**

Suzanne Baker and Diana Bohn, *Co-Coordinator*  
**Nicaragua Center for Community Action**  
Berkeley, CA

Blase Bonpane, Ph.d., *Director*  
**Office of the Americas**

Rev. Arthur Donart  
**Peace and Justice Commission**  
**Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace Roman Catholic Parish, Clinton, Iowa**

**Populist Party of Maryland**

**Rochester Committee on Latin America (ROCLA)**

Dr. Dorothy K. Cinquemani, *Chair*  
**Safe Earth Alliance**  
Largo, FL

**St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America**

**School of the Americas Watch - Puget Sound**

**Seattle CISPES - Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador**

**Vermont branch of School of the Americas Watch**

Elias Witman  
**Student Labor Action Project (SLAP)**  
University of Vermont