



**Press Statement, 30 September 2010**  
**International Federation of LIBertad Committees (FICIB-ex Betancourt Committees)**

Last week; we were surprised and troubled to learn that Senator Piedad Cordoba Ruiz was removed from office by the Attorney General of Colombia who also declared her ineligible to hold office for 18 years due to her «collaboration with FARC». As far as we know, this decision is the first of its kind in Colombia where members of Parliament who have been accused and even imprisoned in relation to the «parapolitics» scandal, have not been subjected to the same sanctions.

We are also astonished that the well documented files on Raul Reyes' computer are cited when these files, still technically suspect have been held by the Colombian state since March 2008.

Like numerous other NGO's who have already expressed their disapproval of and their indignation at this further blow to the tentative steps to talks with FARC rebels begun by the "Colombians for Peace" group on behalf of the civilian population of Colombia, we condemn this harsh accusation against one of the few people in Colombia who have dedicated their political engagement to the search for peace.

Furthermore we remember that in the last few years, Piedad Cordoba's efforts led to the freeing of the last civilian hostages held by FARC and of several military and police hostages over many years. We hope that by her appealing this judgement, Piedad Cordoba will be heard and that the Supreme Court will overrule the decision taken by the Colombian Attorney General.

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**Statement by Sénator Piedad Cordoba in open session, 28 September 2010.**

(Translation of the summary of her speech)

I have been involved as an elected member for 20 years in defending democracy, justice and negotiations in order to resolve conflicts and have work politically on behalf of the general public, I declare that I am submitting to, even if I dispute it, the action taken against me on 27 September of this year, imposed by the Attorney General, Alejandro Ordonez, to remove me from office and to declare me ineligible for political service for a period of 18 years;, because of my beliefs.

At all times, my actions have been in line with Act 22 of the Political Constitution according to which it is a duty and a right to search for peace and .it is an obligation to respect it.

I will continue to travel to every part of this country and the world promoting human understanding and dialogue as solutions to conflict, encouraging social and political organisations who work for peace: I will declare my beliefs, I will be involved in humanitarian actions and will represent the power given to me by those men and women who are exhausted and forced to live without peace in this country.