



Press Statement in support of threatened judges, prosecutors and lawyers in Uribe Case, Colombia

1 August 2025

The Colombia Caravana stands in solidarity with Colombian judges, prosecutors and human rights lawyers following the 28 July 2025 verdict which found former President Álvaro Uribe Vélez guilty of witness tampering in a high-profile case in which he sought to discredit fellow Senator Ivan Cepeda's investigations into Uribe's links to paramilitary groups.

Judge Sandra Liliana Heredia Aranda and Prosecutor Marlen Orjuela took part in the legal proceedings which exposed Uribe's attempts to manipulate testimony from imprisoned paramilitaries to deny links to groups responsible for grave human rights violations. The judgment confirms that Uribe actively sought false testimony to undermine Cepeda's investigations.¹

The Caravana expresses unwavering support for all legal professionals involved in this case, including the judges, the prosecutors, human rights lawyer Reynaldo Villalba, the CAJAR legal collective, and the judges' association FASOL, all of whom have faced threats and intimidation due to their roles in upholding justice.²

Following the verdict, several high-ranking U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, publicly criticised the decision. Rubio stated on X (formerly Twitter) that 'Uribe's only crime has been to fight tirelessly and defend his homeland' and accused Colombia's judiciary of being 'weaponised ... by radical judges'.³

CAJAR on its website comments: 'In a state governed by the rule of law, the justice system must operate with complete independence, without external interference and with respect for sovereignty and constitutional guarantees'.⁴

¹ The Guardian, *Colombia's former president Álvaro Uribe found guilty of witness tampering* (28 July 2025), available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/28/colombias-former-president-alvaro-uribe-found-guilty-of-witness-tampering?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other.

² Fondo de Solidariedad con los Jueces Colombianos – FASOL, *Comunicado Nacional* (28 July 2025), available at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DMqNvvUxKBL/>.

³ Secretary Marco Rubio's X account (28 July 2025), available at: <https://x.com/SecRubio/status/1949961355521319246>.

⁴ Colectivo de Abogados 'José Alvear Restrepo' – CAJAR, *Organizaciones de derechos humanos y víctimas del caso contra Álvaro Uribe Vélez alertan a la ONU y la CIDH sobre presiones externas al poder judicial colombiano* (31 July 2025), available at: <https://www.colectivodeabogados.org/organizaciones-de-derechos-humanos-y-victimas-del-caso-contra-alvaro-uribe-velez-alertan-a-la-onu-y-la-cidh-sobre-presiones-externas-al-poder-judicial-colombiano/>.



We call on the international legal community to recognise the courage and integrity of these professionals and to stand in solidarity with those defending the rule of law and human rights in Colombia. Their work is vital to ensuring accountability and protecting democratic institutions.

The Colombia Caravana urges governments, bar associations, and human rights organisations worldwide to monitor the situation closely and to offer protection and support to those at risk.