

allocating \$200,000 to Peace Brigades International, which provides accompaniment to threatened human rights workers and displaced communities in Colombia, \$410,000 to World Vision, \$250,000 to Médecins Sans Frontières, and \$500,000 to UNICEF for children affected by the armed conflict. In 2000, \$30,000 was contributed by DFAIT’s Human Security Program to support the YouCan! Peacebuilders International: Conflict Resolution Training Program for Colombian youth.

Canada will continue to engage with civil society groups wishing to discuss the Colombia situation and government policy. The Canadian Embassy in Bogota is in regular touch with Canadian and Colombian NGOs, and will continue to be active in the area of human rights, visiting threatened communities and civil society organizations to show international solidarity, monitoring the progress of investigations following massacres or forced disappearances, and applying continuing pressure on the authorities to act. In Ottawa, both CIDA and DFAIT have an open-door policy for NGOs; officials meet regularly with them at annual departmental human rights and peacebuilding consultations, and at forums and workshops on Colombia organized by universities and other organizations.

Recommendation 2

Since trade and investment will be important elements of Canada’s bilateral relationship with Colombia, the Government of Canada should continue to be proactive in encouraging corporate social responsibility on the part of both Canadian firms operating in Colombia and Export Development Canada.

The Government concurs with the Sub-Committee’s determination that the Canadian business community currently active in Colombia is setting a positive example for the future. The Government also concurs that sustained economic growth is essential to the longer-term stability of democratic institutions and the possibility of an enduring peace in Colombia. Foreign trade and investment are critical components of this economic growth and Canadian companies have identified viable trade and investment opportunities in Colombia. Canada is exploring ways of improving trade relations with the Andean region, including Colombia.

We continue to pro-actively promote corporate social responsibility on the part of both Canadian firms operating in Colombia as well as EDC. The Canadian Embassy in Bogota meets on a regular basis with Canadian companies to advise them on a full range of issues, including political developments, local security matters affecting operations, and corporate social responsibility. These meetings allow our officials to keep abreast of company activities. We also perform an important advocacy role when there are problems, particularly those relating to fair and transparent treatment of Canadian investors by