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President  
Président

**Kwasi ADU-AMANKWAH**  
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Mr. Juan Manuel Santos  
President of the Republic of Colombia  
Bogota, Colombia

O/R.:052/2013/SG/RB

03 September, 2013

Dear Mr. President,

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) would like to express its concern regarding the imprisonment of the trade union leader, **Hubert de Jesús Ballesteros Gomez**, on the 25 August 2013.

This trade union leader who is a member of the Executive Council of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores de Colombia (CUT), affiliated to the ITUC and the TUCA, was playing an important role in the national strikes which are currently taking place in Colombia.

Hubert Ballesteros has been one of the ten spokespersons for the Mesa de Interlocución y Acuerdo (MIA) since the 19 August 2013, the body responsible for negotiating with the government. This arrest took place in a climate of mobilisations and national strikes by workers' and social organisations from various sectors at national level, a movement that is supported by the national trade union centres, CUT, CTC and CGT and the Confederación de Pensionados. The government has refused to engage in dialogue and continues its campaign of repression.

We are deeply concerned that despite that guarantees given by Colombia to respect trade union rights, a prominent trade union leader such as Huber Ballesteros could be arrested in what appears to be an attempt to intimidate the organisations involved in the national strikes.

We therefore urge you to do everything possible to ensure the release of Hubert Ballesteros and to give guarantees to ensure the democratic right to freedom of expression for all trade unionists and social activists that are currently involved in the organisation of these collective actions.

We will be monitoring this situation very closely and we await the response from the Colombian authorities regarding the serious issues raised in this letter.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.A.S.', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Kwasi Adu-Amankwah  
**General Secretary**