



## **QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS**

### **HEARING OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND OVERSIGHT**

#### **DOS HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS 2006, MAY 2**

- In December last year, Secretary of State Rice reaffirmed that protecting and supporting human rights defenders around the world is a “central component” of US foreign policy. The Colombian government frequently detains human rights defenders for long periods and frequently accuses them of being terrorists. One such example is Gabriel Gonzalez (Santander Coordinator for the Committee of Solidarity for Political Prisoners) who was recently acquitted of rebellion charges and released after 15 months in prison. While the 2006 State Department human rights report for Colombia cites Mr Gonzalez’s case and one other, it failed to criticize the government. Given Secretary Rice’s recent comments, why doesn’t the State Department support Colombian human rights defenders by urging their immediate release from unjustified detention?

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