

Valledupar – Cesar
Maximun and Medium Security Prison (Tramacua), Valledupar
February 6, 2014

Coordinating Team: Peace March Process, High Mountain Zone of El Carmen de Bolivar, San Jacinto and Maria la Baja.

Sembrandopaz Team

Leaders

Youth Peace Provokers

Accompanying Organizations

Community in General

Receive from me an affectionate greeting for you and your families, desiring for you that the All Mighty gives you success in your daily work and pour happiness and prosperity over you and your communities.

On this occasion I want to congratulate you on the successes achieved in my absence. Every day I am filled with strength from knowing that you are able to direct and bring about a happy end to the accords made for the development of our communities. Today I believe that I am no longer needed in the process, for you have learned to manage and run things very well and this fills me with great satisfaction. Equally, I can say that I did not waste time, as the results are evident.

I must confess that, being in this onerous place, I have felt much affliction, disappointment, and sadness but above all, helplessness to know that in Colombia the innocent are judged while the true delinquents are free to roam about the country, and what is even more outrageous is that the state pays them to do so. But at the same time, I reflect and feel the need to continue struggling. This is a constant effort that requires great sacrifice, such that I must sacrifice freedom, family, health and if it would be necessary, life. But this is not everything: one must be tolerant, wise, filled with patience, but above all with the positive values that allow us to conclude that this struggle is necessary. We take as example the Lord Jesus Christ, who faced trials, temptations, difficulties and even death for one solo fact: LOVE OF HUMANITY. John 3:16.

It is important to have clear the objective of our struggle: life, family, and property, but it is also necessary to perform this struggle in a collective way so that our strength will be greater. It must remain clear that unity is needed because the people united can never be defeated.

I must confess that I feel proud of all of you because all of the work that I have done in a community way is today reflected in you. Because of this, I feel that today I am not I, but am you, as a famous author says, "Today I am not I but am a people and that people is you."

Today, with all respect, I want to advise you that a good leader cannot have a dollar sign as their main objective. Money is necessary but in community work one must be very careful because the Bible is not wrong when it says that money is the cause of all evil. The struggle for dignity and rights in the communities in the social, economic and political is beneficial and transcendental when it is done with sacrifice, with the common good of the communities where we live as objective.

Tolerance plays a fundamental role in these types of processes, keeping in mind that we live in an excluding country, where a monarchy and timocracy operate. Democracy is known more as a term in the constitution, but different ways of thinking are questioned and punished by our governors.

You all are my reason to struggle and I do not repent of anything because my struggle is transparent and protected by the Colombian legal framework.

For your clarity, I have been a person who has respected all of the organizations that have existed in the territory where I have lived, and I enjoy inner peace because there does not exist any commander of any illegal group, whether on the left or the right that is able to label me as a direct collaborator or a militant in any of these organizations.

I am also filled with joy to know that there is no one in any of the hamlets who knows me that is able to say that they have seen me in a uniform or armed with any group. I have always been characterized by my community work, of which you are witnesses and this fills me with satisfaction. If a condemnation arrives, be sure that it is an injustice, although it would not be the first case because out of all of the countries that surround Colombia, Colombia is distinguished by being the greatest violator of human rights.

For your clarity, I have been a person who has respected all of the organizations that have existed in the territory where I have lived, and I enjoy inner peace because there does not exist any commander of any illegal group, whether on the left or the right that is able to label me as a direct collaborator or a militant in any of these organizations.

I want to remind you that my personality does not allow me to change my way of thinking, that my principles are and will be the same and that, most importantly, I do not lend, rent or sell them. For this reason, I send you calmness because I will leave here strengthened and with more clarity than before about the state in which we live.

The torture that I am living I am taking as a vacation in hell, but I am clear that God only sends to human beings that which they can resist. While I consider myself a man with a bit of resistance I hope of you only the sufficient support so that this process continues to advance because the benefits are for you. As you have been able to realize I have only received prejudices which I have faced with resistance and decision, waiting and trusting as the board chief said, "After the storm, comes the calm." This is why I know that after all of this suffering, the triumph will come.

I invite you to continue struggling with great care so that we will finally be able to achieve what we have so greatly desired: progress for our communities.

The time has come to change the history of our communities and to achieve this the decisive support from all of the communities is needed, without thinking of color or race, with only the objective that our new generation will not live that which we had to live.

To the coordinating committee: my most sincere congratulations and thanks for maintaining the struggle in support of our development. I remind you that you are a team and just as a soccer team wins a game, there should be understanding, dialogue, tolerance, concentration, planning with everyone and decisions made among all so that the results do not only benefit one and damage the others but rather work for benefits for all without wanting anything in return. The Bible is clear when it says it is better to give than receive.

To the Youth Peace Provokers: by being youth you have much strength and you are the future of our communities. I advise you that it is not worth it to mix the sentimental with the social and the laboral because that is as far as the processes arrives. You have the beautiful work of fighting for the future of the youth of your communities and to achieve this you must work with sacrifice and not allow badly intentioned commentaries of those who do not want progress in our communities to weigh on you.

To the Village Representatives: You are the fundamental base of this great process, if you are able to orientate and direct your communities in the best way. Victory will not be delayed but will arrive quickly with many benefits. Your work is very important.

To the members of the different communities: You are the reason for this great struggle but your support of your community representatives is important so that the process will arrive with guarantees. Do not allow yourselves to be influenced by enemies of peace and development.

To my friends from Planting Seeds of Peace (Sembrandopaz): I have no words to show the great affection I feel for you. For you, I give my most sincere thanks in the name of all the communities that are part of this process. Without this help and the unconditional support that you have provided all of this may not have been possible. You will always be our principle allies and we beg God that you will continue to prosper so that you will be able to continue to help love communities that need it. My respect for all of you.

To my friends in the Communications Collective: My thanks for this decisive support for this difficult struggle for dignity and the respect of our rights as victims of conflict. You have provided us with a great space and, believe me, that you are very, but very, important for our community. I beg God a million blessings for you.

To the Victim's Unit: I am thankful for the hard work that you have done to back up our communities and to put to work the elements that are offered to us by the Victim's Law to improve the living conditions of our small farmers. It is necessary to further strengthen and allow system connections so that state institutions can start to exercise their functions for the most vulnerable population. To everyone, a strong hug.

To other supporting organizations: my thanks and I ask that you continue to support this process that only seeks to rescue our rights that have been violated for many decades. With your help, we are achieved the beginning of a different way.

I want to as well dedicate part of this writing to all of those people that can be considered to be my enemies. I ask God that he will help you, generously and greatly strengthen your families and

help me to forgive you from my heart. Vengeance belongs to God and although you have tortured me and disintegrated my family, I do not hold resentment nor do I consider you my enemies because it is not, nor has it been, within my plans to harm anybody. I ask God to remove from me hatred, revenge and resentment and endow me with wisdom and tolerance. In my prayers, it is my duty to ask first for those who feel they are my enemies and I wish them the best and that my suffering will turn into happiness for them.

If there remains anyone that I have not greeted and thanked, you may feel privileged to support that the first will be last and the last will be first.

When I manage to communicate with the coordinators and representatives of the communities and they tell me of the achievements that you are obtaining I feel that I am not a prisoner at that moment, that I travel to all the communities and feel that I am there with you all.

I want to send an affectionate greeting to my family and I have to be sincere with them: I feel like I existed for them when I was with them and it hurts a lot that in the five months of imprisonment, equalling 150 days, that I have not received a single call from them, but I want you to know that I love them and always carry them in my heart and although I do not have their affection, they will have mine as long as I live. A strong hug for all.

Lastly, I invite all the coordinators, representatives, young people, women, supporting organizations and the community in general to stand their ground. Remember that nothing is impossible, there only exists incapable people. The people that struggle with vigour will have better generations.

Do not allow that any quarrel or difference separate you. In this type of processes the secret of existence is the conservation of unity.

To the Christians I ask for your prayers for me and for my enemies, so that the truth will come to light as when the people of Israel worshiped Baal. We ask God to send a signal that justice will always prevail. I have no fear because God knew me before the foundation of the world.

A brother greeting and a big hug.

My hope is to be able to meet with you very soon.

Sincerely,

Jorge Luis Montes Hernández

My strength depends on your strength- united we stand!

Valledupar - Cesar