

Letters to the Editor

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Colombia's lawyers

Sir: While Colombia's President Santos visited London last week, lawyers in his homeland continued to face bullets and bomb threats. Six lawyers were killed between January 24 and March 21 this year; 4,400 lawyers were threatened, attacked and killed between 2002 and 2012, according to a document prepared by the prosecution service and given to a delegation of British lawyers who visited Colombia in August 2012.

There are measures that can protect lawyers, such as bodyguards and bullet-proof cars or the presence of Peace Brigades International volunteers. Were the Colombian state to change its attitudes towards the legal profession, this would also help.

We appeal to President Santos to provide a lead. We implore him to speak out and praise the work of the legal profession in preserving access to justice, maintaining the rule of law and protecting human rights. Such a move would add momentum to the steps Colombia is taking to end conflict.

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