

Press release.

LAWYERS WITHOUT BORDERS PARTICIPATE IN THE FORUM “VISIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ITS APPLICATION IN COLOMBIA”

Bogotá, 23 July 2014, Lawyers without Borders Canada (LWBC) took part in the forum “Visions of International Law and its application in Colombia” organized by the Colombian Attorney General’s Office (*Fiscalía General de la Nación*) and the magazine *Semana*. LWBC’s Director General Pascal Paradis participated in the panel “Crimes against Humanity in the Colombian context”, alongside Javier Ciurlizza, Director of International Crisis Group for the Americas and the Caribbean, Augusto Ibañez, former President of the Colombian Supreme Court and Ricardo Forero, legal adviser to the Ministry of Defense.

In his intervention, Pascal Paradis highlighted Colombia’s international obligations regarding crimes against humanity and the principle of complementarity in the Rome Statute. He recognized the current efforts being made by the Colombian justice system, but affirmed that crimes against humanity committed by all actors in the armed conflict must be properly investigated and sanctioned. He added that a failure to do so could result in “international consequences” for Colombia.

Pascal Paradis also paid tribute to human rights lawyers, including ASFC partners, victims and members of civil society in Colombia in their pursuit for justice in cases involving international crimes: “It is one of our main messages today; the lawyers representing victims play a fundamental role.” He added “lawyers and victims face grave dangers. All the lawyers supported by LWBC have been threatened and have provisional measures. It is vital that we recognize this”.

The forum continues in Bogotá until Wednesday 23 of July. Other participants include Luis Moreno Ocampo, former Prosecutor of the international Criminal Court, and Eduardo Montealegre Lynett, Colombian Attorney General.

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