

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

August 23, 2023

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write with concern over the ongoing effort to ensure accountability and justice for human rights abuses in Colombia. As you know, both right-wing paramilitary groups and left-wing terrorist organizations have been responsible for thousands of human rights abuses in Colombia for several decades. There has been consistent bipartisan support in the United States and Colombia for investigating those responsible in order to support peace and reconciliation in Colombia. Recent events in Colombia, however, may undermine this search for accountability and justice for these abuses.

Last month, Colombian President Gustavo Petro announced the appointment of several Colombians to be “peace managers” to handle negotiations with armed groups as part of his “Total Peace” plan. Among these is Salvatore Mancuso, the former commander of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), who will allegedly handle negotiations with Clan de Golfo, the country’s largest drug cartel and which emerged from one of the remnants of the demobilized AUC. Mancuso’s appointment as a “peace manager” is problematic, not least because he has been convicted by U.S. federal courts for drug trafficking and by Colombian courts for more than 1,500 cases of murder or forced disappearances. While he is currently incarcerated in the United States, he has yet to serve out any sentences for his Colombian convictions.

I, therefore, urge you to reject any request from the Colombian government for the extradition of Mancuso, until his appointment as a “peace manager” is revoked, or there is credible assurance that Mancuso will serve the sentences imposed by Colombian courts. To allow Mancuso to not only walk free in Colombia, but also represent the Colombian government in negotiations with drug traffickers currently working to flood our communities with narcotics, would be an insult to the thousands of Colombians who are victims of Mancuso’s crimes.

I thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator