



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Press Statement

**Richard Boucher, Spokesman**

Washington, DC

February 11, 2005

## **U.S. Government Civilian Contractors Kidnapped and Held for Two Years By Colombian Terrorists**

Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, were kidnapped by the terrorist organization *The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia*, shortly after their plane crashed in southern Colombia on February 13, 2003. Terrorists murdered the pilot, the American Thomas Janis, and Colombian national Luis Alcides Cruz. Our hearts go out to the families of all those who have been affected by the brutality of these terrorists.

For the past two years, U.S. and Colombian authorities have worked tirelessly for the release of Gonsalves, Howes, and Stansell, and to bring to justice the persons responsible for their kidnapping and for the murder of their colleagues. We have received excellent cooperation from the Colombian government in our efforts to bring back these three men.

The State Department's *Rewards for Justice* campaign offers as much as \$5 million for information leading to the apprehension or conviction of anyone involved in kidnapping of Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, or the murder of Thomas Janis. Acting on information gained from *Rewards for Justice*, the Colombian government captured a senior member of the terrorist group holding the three Americans. In addition to *Rewards for Justice*, the Department of Defense is offering about \$340,000 and the possibility of a U.S. visa to anyone offering information leading to the successful resolution of the hostage situation.

We continue to hold the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia responsible for the safety, health and well being of the three American hostages, and we demand that they be released immediately and unharmed.

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