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IFOR has special consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC) and representation at UNESCO.*

Human Rights Council, 24th Session

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Agenda Item 6

Adoption of the UPR Report on **Colombia**

Oral Intervention by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation

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Colombia has come a long way. In the first cycle of the UPR it rejected a recommendation that it introduce arrangements for conscientious objectors to military service, claiming that the duty of citizens to defend the country took priority over any freedom of conscience considerations,

Subsequently its own constitutional court has told it that the Colombian constitution must be interpreted as guaranteeing the right of conscientious objection to military service, and indicated that pending legislation it would be prepared to hear tutela applications from individual conscientious objectors.

Sadly, no reference was made in April's working group to the advance question from Slovenia as to whether Colombia had yet adopted any specific legislation that refers to or regulates the right to conscientious objection with regard to military service.

To the best of our information, such legislation, also called for by the Constitutional Court is still stalled in the parliamentary process. Meanwhile military recruitment still relies too heavily on irregular round-ups "batidas" in the street which afford no protection to conscientious objectors or anyone else who should not be being recruited.

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation calls on Colombia to give greater urgency to addressing these two linked issues.