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**"And you shall be my witnesses . . .
even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8**

Dear Friends,

How do you get from Bishkek to Bogotá? It generally takes over a full day of travel (sometimes much longer) and at least 2 stops to get from the capitol of Kyrgyzstan to the capitol of Colombia. And you can only do it on multiple airlines. Thankfully, that particular trip is not on the agenda for Advocates, but we will be reaching out to both of these nations this month. Ruth Ross will be in Colombia while I will be traveling to Kyrgyzstan, via Dubai.

From Kyrgyzstan. . .

In March, our Advocates from Central Asia decided the time was right for them to gather together to encourage one another. Because they live in predominantly Muslim countries, they face different challenges. Our dear Russian friend Katya Smyslova reports:

Central Asian lawyers do not like boring events but value time together in eating, sharing, laughing, dancing and singing. It is not because they "are undeveloped." It is exclusively valuable for them because many of them are rejected or disrespected by their extended families for their Christian faith. When they are gathered together with other Christians they celebrate the unity with their new loving family in Christ. So we will have time for sharing amazing testimonies, for prayers and also will have a lot of fun during the conference. We encourage lawyers to bring their favorite national music and national costumes are welcomed for people would celebrate their national identity as well as identity in Christ.

When the invitation came, I felt very strongly that I needed to join them, but I sought confirmation from the Lord. When I realized that my flight would connect in Dubai, I was encouraged because, earlier in March, a friend from Dubai offered his home (10 minutes from airport), if I ever had a layover there. It turns out that my return journey includes a 15 hour layover. I plan to spend time with my friend and his family, and meet new friends.

Further confirmation came the week I made my reservation. A former church member who now practices law in Los Angeles was in DC for a wedding—with her fiancé. He grew up in Dubai and connected me to a Christian lawyer who happens to be the legal counsel for the airline that I fly from Dubai to Bishkek. Another "divine co-incident" that sealed the deal. I knew that God wanted me to join our colleagues from Central Asia, with the added bonus of meeting new colleagues in the Middle East. I travel from June 15-23.

AI Global Council member Robin David from India is one of the planned speakers. Attendees are expected from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, South Korea, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan (a nation that is one of the worst human rights violators). Topics for the conference include: corruption, Christian lawyers from Muslim families, being a Christian lawyer in a secular workplace, serving church and community, finances, fulfilling the Great Commission, and challenges for Asian women in legal profession. We covet your prayers for all those who will be traveling across borders that are not always the safest, and for a great time of encouragement.

To Colombia. . .

From Bishkek to Bogotá could also be the title of a great mystery novel. But it is no mystery that our own Ruth Ross spent significant time in Colombia over the past few years. That is thanks to her husband Pat's job there. While in Colombia, Ruth meets with Christian lawyers from across the country. Enclosed this month, in lieu of our regular prayer calendar, is Ruth's report on their efforts to convene a national conference. I was encouraged by the report and I know that you will be too.

Thanks for your prayers for Christian lawyers in Colombia like David Perez and others—including Juan Carlos, who travelled from Medellín by bus for a full day—who are trying to encourage one another through fellowship and camaraderie. Please continue to lift all of our Advocates from Latin America as they face challenges not much different from Central Asia: corruption, violence, and just being salt and light in an increasingly secular culture.

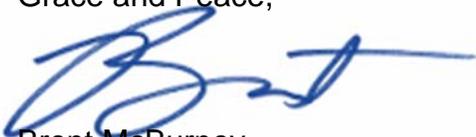
To the Ends of the Earth

In addition to the Central Asia conference June 19-21, please continue to pray for these three upcoming Advocates events. First, **Advocates Africa** convenes its 11th continental convocation in Cape Town, South Africa from **August 12-16**. In conjunction with that conference, the Global Council and Board of Advocates will also meet. Second, the **Federación Inter Americana de Juristas Cristianos** (FIAJC/Advocates Latin America) convenes its 11th regional convención in San Salvador, El Salvador, from **September 3-6**. Finally, **Advocates Asia** convenes its 14th continental conference in New Delhi, India from **October 22-24**. Pray for the many details and for safe travels for all those who need to attend each gathering.

Thank you so much for your prayer cover and financial support. Trips to Bishkek and Bogota don't just happen without your help. Traveling to the ends of the earth to encourage, equip and enable advocates is what God calls us to do, and you play a key role.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His perfect . . .

Grace and Peace,



Brent McBurney
President and CEO



REPORT ON COLOMBIAN LAWYER'S CONFERENCE

May 14, 2015 ~ Santa Marta, Colombia

By Ruth AM Ross, Deputy Executive Director Global Council

The God Who produced and formed the world and all things in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade shrines. Neither is He served by human hands, as though He lacked anything, for it is He Himself Who gives life and breath and all things to all [people]. And He made from one [common origin, one source, one blood] all nations of men to settle on the face of the earth, having definitely determined [their] allotted periods of time and the fixed boundaries of their habitation (their settlements, lands, and abodes), So that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after Him and find Him, although He is not far from each one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being; as even some of your [own] poets have said, For we are also His offspring.

Acts 17:24-28: (Amplified Bible)

As many of you know, in May of 2014 after serving on AI's Board and Global Council for many years, I became a staff member as Deputy Executive Director, Global Council supporting AI's CEO, Brent McBurney. I am always amazed to see how God connects the dots in our lives, as is borne out by the many incredible God-moments and divine interventions. He is keenly interested in us!

Throughout the past decade or two, I have been blessed to travel to many unique nations, some only to visit but some to spend more extensive time. A number of these opportunities have arisen from serving Advocates International (AI). Yet many have arisen through the work of my husband, Pat, a career railroader. At the present time, Pat is managing a railroad in Colombia, a venue many would not make their choice destination. By God's grace, Pat's giftings and experiences are being used quite dramatically notwithstanding the language and other cultural challenges. Pat has two offices: one in the capital city of Bogota, and the other in the port city of Santa Marta where I visit him from time to time and work from my AI virtual office. We are grateful God has opened a door for us to come alongside Colombians and help where we can.

Prior to Pat's deployment, I knew only one Christian lawyer in all of Colombia, a nation of 48 million people. That person was David Perez Palacio whom I previously met at AI conferences in Washington, DC and in Latin America. On my first visit to Colombia, I had no idea where David was living and working. How delighted I was to learn he was working right in Santa Marta where Pat was posted! Coincidence? Not likely. I reflected back to our early meetings. How could David and I have known then that in God's timing, we would one day both end up in Santa Marta! This was especially significant given that David had only moved to Santa Marta a few years earlier.

When David and I first reconnected in Santa Marta in early 2014, he explained some of the struggles the Christian lawyer movement had been experiencing. I was not surprised. Knowing the work was vital to the nation, I also knew the spiritual warfare that would follow. I thanked him for his investment, encouraged him in the Lord's work and asked him to pray about what God might continue to do in Colombia *through him*. David was not sure how or even if he should get involved again but after he and his dear wife, Betsy (who speaks fluent English) prayed, he felt God wanted him to plan a national Christian lawyers conference. I was thrilled. It was clear that God had placed a call on David's life to reach lawyers for Christ, given his

prior investment in law and ministry including the work he had done amongst disenfranchised people groups like the indigenous tribes of Colombia who had been denied religious freedom. My husband Pat and I were honored to stand with and support David and Betssy in their important ongoing mission.

Last summer, we began planning the Colombian 2015 Christian Lawyer's Conference in Santa Marta, the first of its kind in several years. The event was originally planned to take place March 14-15, 2015 but had to be postponed due to David's illness and work responsibilities. This was disappointing but necessary. Nonetheless, a group of approximately 15 determined lawyers and law students from several cities met on March 14 for prayer, fellowship, and to begin planning the next official conference. David gave a strong devotional message about obedience and sanctification from 1 Sam 16: 1-13 and I was privileged to share my journey and the work of Advocates International. We heard about some of the challenges and threats to religious freedom and the desire of this passionate group to minister God's justice to their nation and to evangelize their colleagues.



Some of the 15 attendees on March 14; David and Juan Carlos (above far right; law students below left)



One of the lawyers from Medellin, Juan Carlos Tobin Arboleda, spent a full day on the bus to be with us, and expressed a keen desire to support David in the work. He explained that he already has 25 Christian lawyers organized in his region and desired to travel to other cities to generate interest and enlist other lawyers. There are 21 law schools in Medellin and 3 in Santa Marta. Juan Carlos offered to host the national event in Medellin, a city of two million people. July 2016 was suggested so as not to conflict with this year's regional Christian lawyer's conference in San Salvador, September 3 -6.

The attendees left the meeting strengthened and encouraged. Notwithstanding the setbacks, they knew God was at work in their midst. David advised that a board was established as well as a foundation to lead the Christian lawyers' movement so he would not be alone in the work. He explained: "Everyone will have his or her responsibilities, moving from this meeting. There will be local chapters in many cities also. Our work should be an offering to the Lord."

God is working out His purposes in all of us in every stage and generation. How awesome to see His hand moving in so many places and in so many unique ways! Never doubt that the God of the universe has His hand upon you and your circumstances. He is working it out for your good and His glory! – RR