

News from
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**STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN ENGEL ON DECISION BY THE
COLOMBIAN CONSTITUTIONAL COURT**

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Eliot Engel, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, issued the following statement regarding the Colombian Constitutional Court’s Friday decision that bars Colombians from voting on a referendum to lift the ban on third presidential terms:

“Friday’s decision by the Colombian Constitutional Court and President Alvaro Uribe’s respect for the court’s ruling is proof of the country’s strong and thriving democracy. At a time when democratic space is closing in certain countries in the hemisphere, Colombia’s strong institutions and adherence to the rule of law should serve as an example to us all.

“As Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I have visited Colombia three times. Each time, I have been more impressed by the remarkable progress made by President Uribe in enhancing citizen security. Over the past eight years, President Uribe’s democratic security policies have led to dramatic reductions in the country’s kidnapping and murder rates. At the same time, economic growth has been strong. The next president of Colombia will certainly have big shoes to fill.”