

# COLOMBIA NEWSLETTER

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## COLOMBIA NATIONAL CONTEXT

In the second half of the year, the new National Government implemented the 100-day Emergency Plan presented by HRD platforms to guarantee the lives of leaders.

The Plan seeks a rapid response from State institutions, and to this end, spaces for the coordination of institutions (PMUV) were created and a temporary monitoring body for the Emergency Plan (CNGS) was set up.

The situation of human rights violations in the year 2022 is reflected in its figures:

- Social leaders assassinated - 158
- Peace Accord signatories assassinated - 42
- Massacres - 87
- Forced displacements - more than 78,000 people
- Confinement - more than 200 communities

The most affected populations have been the black, indigenous and peasant communities, which began the year 2023 with 8 assassinated leaders and 11 massacres.



## **COLOMBIA:**

### **100 DAYS OF NEW GOVERNMENT - TOTAL PEACE**

On August 8th the center-left coalition, the Historical Pact, arrived at the Nariño house (presidential palace) and with this new government came a proposal of "Total Peace" for Colombia. This proposal implies making "peace policy a State policy. It will be a priority and transversal in State affairs, participatory, broad, inclusive and integral".

On November 3rd, the law known as "Total Peace" was approved, empowering the Government to open negotiation mechanisms to achieve Total Peace. The following fundamental points stand out from the text:

- Progress in the dialogues with the different armed actors and reconciliation mechanisms such as the Voluntary Surrender of Arms.
- Approval of the Regions of Peace, spaces in which peace dialogues would take place with presidential authorization.
- Creation of the Peace Cabinet, where each Ministry shall define the components of the public peace policy that fall within its competence.
- Creation of the Social Service for Peace as an alternative for young people to the Compulsory Military Service.

In the first 100 days of the new government, talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN) were resumed and the different armed groups showed their willingness to work towards peace. Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca is the first municipality to develop a plan to achieve "Total Peace".

# EMERGENCIES

## HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE RURAL AREA OF BUENAVENTURA: DISPOSSESSION, DISPLACEMENT AND CONFINEMENT



Since November 2021, the Indigenous and Black communities in the rural area of Buenaventura have been forcibly displaced to the urban area where they remain in shelters in conditions that constitute a humanitarian crisis, while those who have not been displaced remain forcibly confined without the ability to leave their homes. At the end of 2022, these communities are still in the same situation without a comprehensive response, both in terms of humanitarian assistance in the urban areas and in terms of the existence of security conditions for their return or relocation to their ancestral territories.

November 28, 2022 marked one year since the disappearance of two social leaders from the Yurumanguí River Community Council, Abencio Caicedo and Edinson García. Their whereabouts are still unknown but their community has not stopped looking for them.

### THREATS AGAINST SOCIAL LEADERS IN THE NORTH OF CAUCA

Cauca has historically been one of the Colombian regions most affected by clashes between different armed groups fighting for the territory's control. After the Peace Accord was signed in 2016, the armed conflict was worsening with armed actors disputing for control over Black, Indigenous, and Campesinxs communities.

Many of the leaders of northern Cauca have been forced to leave their territories to save their lives. Witness for Peace accompanies the communities in northern Cauca and issued Action Alerts in response to direct death threats against members of the Association for the Establishment of the Campesino Reserve Zone in Miranda (ASPROZONAC), including Briceida Lemos who, together with Leider Valencia, have been working to implement the peace process, including the voluntary substitution of illicit crops in northern Cauca.

# UPI LA RIOJA BOGOTÁ

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLE WITH NO RESPONSE FROM THE STATE



After seven months of resistance and permanent Minga in the Bogotá National Park, families from 15 indigenous nations of Colombia, organized through the Indigenous Authorities in Bakatá (AIB) process, reached an agreement with the city and national government.

However, while the communities complied with their part of the agreement and voluntarily left the park, the Indigenous Authorities in Bakatá have denounced the government's non-compliance with the conditions established in the agreement, including temporary housing in dignified conditions and guaranteed return.

On October 19th, they suffered a new wave of repression when they demanded dignified housing conditions. Although dialogue with the government has been re-established, the housing conditions at La Rioja Integral Protection Center continue to be contrary to human dignity, as it is not possible to accommodate 1,300 people in a place adapted for only 300.

## ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE COLOMBIA INTERNATIONAL TEAM

*Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective (WfPSC) works with grassroots Indigenous, Black and Peasant organizations and communities.*

## **ACCOMPANIMENT**

During the second half of the year, the following accompaniments were carried out:

- Accompaniment of Justapaz in its peace-building process with church communities in Arauca, Chocó and Nariño.
- Accompanying Justice and Peace in the reconciliation event in Caquetá.
- Accompaniment to Indigenous Authorities in Bakatá in Bogotá.

## **ADVOCACY**

November 2 - 15 Speaking Tour in the United States from - The Resistance Continues. An Indigenous Perspective from Colombia: María Violet Medina Quiscué

María Violet Medina Quiscué, Nasa indigenous leader and spokesperson for Indigenous Authorities in Bakatá, was in North Carolina and Washington with APP, presenting the situation of indigenous peoples in Colombia, and in particular, in the city of Bogotá. María Violet presented the serious situation of indigenous peoples in Bogotá, as well as their processes of organization and resistance.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Articles:

- “Aquí estoy, aquí me quedo”
- Después de 11 años de resistencia, trabajadores enfermos siguen esperando una respuesta de EUA
- “Si no hubiese tanta arma, no habría tanto muerto”
- Cauca - Étnico y Rural : Más de 500 años de Resistencia

Interviews:

- Andrés Maíz: “No estamos pidiendo que nos den derechos, los estamos exigiendo”
  - Serie Mujeres negras del Cauca: Ana Delia Candelo y Deicy Patricia

Virtual Events:

- Women living the Liberation Theology
- Cauca’s Black Women in Resistance