



**Afro-Colombian
Communities
have the right to
choose their own
future.**

**Law 70 of 1993, the
Law of Black Communities,
is their tool.**

Afro-descendants constitute 26% out of 40 million people in Colombia. The passage of Law 70 in 1993, or the “Law of Black Communities,” is one of the biggest achievements of the Afro-Colombian civil rights movement. This law is an instrument against the historical discrimination and lack of recognition Afro-descendants have suffered since slavery. According to Law 70, the Colombian government must guarantee the preservation of the ancestral territories of Afro-descendants, invest in their socioeconomic development, and protect their cultural identity and civil rights. **Nevertheless, our Afro-descendant brothers and sisters still face numerous challenges:**

Poverty: 80% of Afro-Colombians live in poverty. Between 30% and 50% of their basic needs are not satisfied.

Exclusion and Racism: Afro-Colombians have the lowest socioeconomic indicators in the country, due to the marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination they have endured for centuries.

Internal Displacement, Violence, and Expropriation of Territories: Afro-descendants are the most hard-hit by internal displacement in Colombia, which has the largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. Just this past March, 7,000 people from El Charco (an Afro-Colombian territory) were forced to flee their territories due to armed conflicts. In the port city of Buenaventura, it was reported that 265 young people were executed by the armed forces in the first half of this year. From 1995-2005, 62% of Afro-Colombians living in collective territories were forced to flee their lands. In the communities of Jiguamiandó and Curvaradó in Chocó, 96% of the collective territories have been expropriated for palm oil cultivations.

Social and Cultural Development: The mechanisms for Afro-Colombians’ legal and social participation have not been fully implemented. This represents a violation of Law 70 of 1993, and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169. The future of Afro-Colombian culture and

the sustainable development of their communities are in serious jeopardy.

Despite these obstacles, Afro-Colombian leaders continue to resist violent attacks and support peaceful solutions under Law 70.

Let Afro-Colombians know they are not alone in their struggle. Encourage U.S. policy makers to support House Resolution 618 on the plight of Afro-Colombians.

Help to ensure that all U.S. policies, programs, and economic development efforts in Afro-Colombian territories are guided by Law 70 and reinforce its framework.

**Members of the NASGACC include the Association of Internally Displaced Afro-Colombians USA (AFRODES USA), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), TransAfrica Forum, Global Rights, Organizacion Un Dia de Esperanza, Manuel Zapata Olivella Center for Human Development and Education, Afrocolombian Folkloric Group-Tangaré, and African descendant activists Norma Jackson, Joseph Jordan, and Roland Roebuck.

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