

Press Release

Fundamental Rights for the Inhabitants of the Colombian Pacific Coast

May 21, 2017

The bishops of the ecclesiastical jurisdictions that integrate the region of the Pacific Coast In the face of the current events of social mobilization in the Department of Chocó and in the city of Buenaventura, we declared.

1. The social protests currently carried out in Chocó and Buenaventura are justified given the historical state abandonment, the violence from various armed actors and the corruption of many leaders at all levels.
2. The National Government should do its best to comply with previous agreements and respond to the legitimate aspirations of citizens demanding fundamental rights.
3. Violent and vandalistic actions discredit fair social protest. Therefore, it must be categorically rejected by civil society. Only peaceful civic protest has legitimacy and effectiveness.
4. The police must be moderate and respectful in its mission of social control, avoiding overstepping their roles and functions.
5. The institutions responsible for the protection of human rights must deploy and ensure the protection of civilians and denounce abuses that may be committed against them.
6. The tasks of the organizing committees of social mobilization are: to generate space for dialogue, constantly call for order and facilitate the process of social actions, so that the population is not affected during the demand for their rights.
7. We invite you to pray earnestly to God so that this social situation is resolved promptly, in justice, and with dialogue and objectivity.

Archdiocese of Cali

Diocese of Buenaventura

Diocese of Quibdó

Diocese of Guapi

Diocese of Tumaco

Diocese of Istmina-Tadó