

Resolution #19

Afro-Colombians and the Implementation of the Colombian Peace Accords

WHEREAS:

Afro-Colombians were arguably those most adversely affected by the 52-years-long war between the Colombian government and the guerillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) – which officially ended with the ratification by the Colombian Congress of a Peace Accord, on November 30, 2016; and

WHEREAS:

Afro-Colombians were disproportionately the victims of murder at the hands of rightwing paramilitary forces and forced displacements in the countryside – caught and uprooted by the fighting among guerillas, the government and militias backed by the state and financed by drug-traffickers and multinational corporations; and

WHEREAS:

Though Afro-Colombians are only 10.6% of the country’s population, at least 22.5% of the displaced population identified themselves as Afro-Colombian, in a 2010 government survey – though the percentage was certainly larger, as many feared reprisals if they registered as “officially” displaced; and

WHEREAS:

While the national poverty rate in Colombia was 49.2%, in 2011, 78.5% of Afro-Colombians lived below the poverty level; and

WHEREAS:

The Peace Accords include the *Consulta Previa* mechanism, the “prior, free and informed consultation” of ethnic communities, as the main safeguard for ethnic communities’ rights – to be applied in the implementation of all the Accords: the Accords acknowledge the legitimacy of ethnic authorities as key actors; and

WHEREAS:

The Accords propose the creation of special mechanisms for consultation about and implementation of each accord – comprehensive rural reform, political participation, victims, solution to the problem of drugs and implementation and verification.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists support the Colombian Ethnic Commission organizations in their efforts to access and implement the protections and guarantees of political participation and self-government promised in the “Ethnic Chapter” of the Peace Accords between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP), which was ratified in November 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That CBTU work with national and international allies to encourage the Colombian Congress to include, in all relevant legislation, the principles, safeguards and guarantees promised to Afro-Colombians and indigenous populations, by provisions of the Accord’s Ethnic Chapter; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That CBTU and its allies urge the Colombian Congress to provide adequate money and training to the Afro-Colombian and indigenous organizations and communities which must develop the capacity and resources to effectively participate in the mechanisms proposed for the implementation of the Accords.

Submitted by: DC CBTU Chapter

May 26, 2017