



December 5, 2023

Killings of Indigenous Leaders in Colombia Must Be Halted

Our organizations strongly condemn the assassination of Nasa Kwesx Kiwe Indigenous governor, Phanor Guazaquillo Peña. On December 3, sicarios shot and killed Mr. Peña in broad daylight during the funeral of fellow indigenous leader Manuel Carlosama at a cemetery in Puerto Asis, Putumayo. Mr. Peña served as a delegate for the High Instance for Ethnic Peoples (IEANPE), the mechanism set up by the 2016 peace agreement to advance the implementation of the Ethnic Chapter. Mr. Peña's death signifies a serious blow to the Nasa people and all ethnic communities in the country.

In the conflict observatory of the Institute for Development and Peace (INDEPAZ), Mr. Peña is recorded as the 155th social leader killed in 2023. Colombia has suffered 90 massacres so far this year.

Civil society organizations denounce the grave security situation facing Colombia's social leaders that particularly targets Indigenous persons. We urge all of Colombia's illegal armed groups, structures, and criminal entities to cease targeting civil society and civilians. Our message to those groups engaged in peace dialogues or talks with the Colombian government is that: by killing ethnic minority leaders and members of these communities you are greatly undermining any possibility of gaining global support for your peace efforts and/or incentives to demobilize your illegal structures.

We strongly urge the Attorney General's office to immediately investigate, sanction, and bring to justice the perpetrators of this crime. Both the Ministries of Justice and Interior

must take action to guarantee the safety and security of social leaders. While we appreciate the U.S. Embassy in Bogota's tweet condemning this murder, we strongly urge that the U.S. government encourage Colombia to take bold steps to prevent further murders of Indigenous leaders from taking place and to implement the security aspects of the 2016 peace accords that protect ethnic minorities.

The Washington Office on Latin America

Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective

The Latin American Working Group Education Fund

National Lawyers Guild S.F. Bay Area Chapter

Institute for Race, Equality and Human Rights

Global Witness

Fundación Ficamazonía

Equipo Claretiano ante la ONU

Colombia Human Rights Network

Colombia Human Rights Committee

Colombia Acuerdo de Paz NGO

Ciclo de Conferencias de Estudios Africanos y de la Diáspora Africana

Amazon Watch