



Dear all,

We think that the best action the U.S. Congress can take at this point to consolidate peace, protect social leaders and Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities is to support the Senate markup of the FY24 bill. This includes:

1. \$15 million for USAID's human rights program, which supports respect for human rights, protection of human rights defenders, and peace accord implementation.
2. \$25 million for Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities and organizations.
3. Programs for demining, helping farmers transition from illicit activities, formalizing land titles, and returning land to internally displaced persons.
4. Support to the tripartite transitional justice system of the 2016 peace accords (the Special Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, and activities related to the recommendations made by the Truth Commission).
5. Programs that support labor rights that implement the U.S. Colombia-Labor Action Plan.
6. Assistance to Venezuelans and other migrants and refugees that incorporate the receiving communities.

Further, we ask that the U.S. Congress provides \$5 million for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights office in Colombia (a \$3 million increase from what is proposed in the Senate report).

U.S. policymakers should support a continuation of the human rights conditions on military and police aid included in the Senate. These conditions are necessary to encourage improvements in respect for human rights by the Colombian security forces, and have been in legislation in some form since FY 2000. These conditions have helped to stop horrific abuses from taking place and saved the lives of many at risk.

The State Department, Embassy and other government officials should bring these cases to the attention of Colombian officials. Colombia should be urged to take action to protect the social leaders at risk, investigate and prosecute those responsible for the threats, attacks and killings of social leaders and respond to the security and humanitarian situations listed in this document.

Below you will find the security, human rights and humanitarian cases brought to WOLA's attention for our intervention from January 15 until March 1, 2024. We remain extremely

concerned about the safety and well-being of the members of the investigative news outlet *La Nueva Prensa*. Aside from ongoing death threats, it is the target of false legal claims. Between February 1 and March 1, 2024, it received at least 26 legal claims. Many of these are questionable allegations and spurious charges meant to bankrupt and block the organization from doing its work.

Massacres

Triple Homicide in Morales Amid Clashes Between Armed Groups (Bolívar)

On January 21, two men and one woman were killed by armed assailants in Morales, Bolívar, marking the sixth massacre of 2024 according to the Institute for the Study of Development and Peace (Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz, [Indepaz](#)). The Ombudsman's Office (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) has highlighted rising violence in Bolivar and nationally from clashes between illegal armed groups, extortion, and threats spilling into urban areas. The 37th Front of the Middle Magdalena Bloc of the EMC-FARC dissidents (*Frente 37 del Bloque Magdalena Medio del Estado Mayor Central de las FARC*), AGC (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia o Clan de Golfo*, AGC) paramilitaries, ELN National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN) guerrillas, and local gangs operate in Morales.

Triple Homicide in Pitalito (Huila)

Indepaz [reported](#) that on January 21, three men were killed by armed assailants in the Magdalena neighborhood of Pitalito, Huila. The Ismael Ruiz Front of the EMC-FARC dissidents, Second Marquetalia dissidents, and local criminal gangs maintain a presence in the territory.

Three Ambushed and Assassinated in Private Residence (Cesar)

On January 21, Indepaz [reported](#) that three people were ambushed and gunned down in a home by two men in the San Carlos neighborhood in El Copey, Cesar. The two assailants killed three people in the home with firearms and left two others wounded. The Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia and smaller local gangs are known to operate in the area.

Four Young People Assassinated by Hitmen in Fundación (Magdalena)

On February 7, Indepaz [reported](#) that four young men were assassinated in an apparent contract killing along the Troncal de Oriente road between Fundación and Aracataca. The group was conversing when they were attacked by armed subjects. The following armed groups are present in the area: Conquering Self-Defense Forces of the Sierra Nevada (*Autodefensas Conquistadores de la Sierra Nevada*, ASCN), the High Command of the Middle Magdalena Bloc

of the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (*Estado Mayor del Bloque Magdalena Medio de las AGC*), and local gangs.

Four Killed, Two School Children Injured in Rural Community (Cauca)

Indepaz [reported](#) that on February 12, four people including a peasant farmer and his son were killed at a family farmstead in the municipality of Piamonte. Two youths were kidnapped, and their bodies were later recovered in the vicinity. In the same area, an armed group also attacked a school bus, injuring two children. Armed groups with influence in the area include the Carolina Ramirez Front of the Southern Block of the EMC-FARC (*Frente Carolina Ramírez Bloque Sur del EMC-FARC*), the Bolivian Commanders of the Border associated with Second Marquetalia dissidents (*Comandos Bolivarianos de la Frontera*), and local gangs.

Three Assassinated on Street (Valle del Cauca)

On February 13, Indepaz [reported](#) that a man and two women were assassinated by a pair of hitmen who fired shots from a motorcycle in the municipality of Ansermanuevo. Three other people present at the attack were wounded and taken to a medical center. The Los Flacos gang and other local criminal organizations operate in the area.

Four Missing Persons Recovered from Mass Grave (Risaralda)

On February 22, Indepaz [reported](#) that four people whose families had not heard from them since November 2023 were found in a grave in Yarumo in the municipality of Santuario.

Killings of Social Leaders

Abduction and Murder of Social Leader (Antioquia)

On January 17, Indepaz [reported](#) that the body of Fidel Antonio Hernández, member of the Santa María Neighborhood Community Action Board (*Junta de Acción Comunal del Barrio Santa María*) was found floating in a canal close to the municipality of Apartadó, Antioquia. He had been missing for three days. The following armed groups are present in the area: AGC, ELN guerrillas, and other local gangs.

Nasa Indigenous Leader Assassinated (Cauca)

On January 19, Indepaz [reported](#) that José Alirio Chochué Molano, a 2016 FARC Peace Accord signatory and spiritual elder of the Nasa Indigenous community in Pueblo Nuevo, was assassinated by armed men in his home. The Dagoberto Ramos Front of the Southeast Bloc of



the EMC-FARC (*Frente Dagoberto Ramos, Bloque Suroriente del EMC-FARC*) and local criminal groups operate in this area.

Community Action Board President Assassinated (Valle del Cauca)

On January 29, Indepaz [reported](#) that Fernando Romero, President of the Community Action Board (*Junta de Acción Comunal, JAC*) and member of the local waterworks board, was assassinated alongside another person during a shootout in the town Cachimbal in the municipality of Vijes. The area is a known transit zone for the Jaime Martínez Front of the Western Bloc of the EMC-FARC (*Frente Jaime Martínez del Bloque Occidental del EMC-FARC*). Local gangs also operate in the area.

Rural Community Action Board President Killed (Valle del Cauca)

On January 30, Indepaz [reported](#) that 48-year-old Fabián Castaño Serna, a farmer and founding President of the Community Action Board (*Junta de Acción Comunal, JAC*) in the village of La Alejandría was assassinated. Castaño was the manager for community productivity projects and supported sports and cultural activities for his community and surrounding communities. He was also a school bus driver and was assassinated by armed men while he was completing his school bus route, in the rural zone of Tuluá.

Social Leader in Puerto Caicedo Assassinated (Putumayo)

On February 6, Indepaz [reported](#) that social leader Lirnedey Soto was kidnapped by armed men and later murdered. His body was found by community members on February 4 along a path outside the remote community of La Pradera. Soto had served as treasurer of the Community Action Board (*Junta de Acción Comunal, JAC*) in La Pradera. The Frontier Command (*Comandos de la Frontera*) operates in the area as a part of the Second Marquetalia dissidents, in addition to the Carolina Ramírez Front of the EMC-FARC and other local criminal groups.

LGBTQ+ Leader Murdered (Tolima)

On February 7, 2024, Caribe Afirmativo [reported](#) that Aldinebin Ramos, co-founder of the LGBTQ+ Organization Chaparral Diversa, had been assassinated along with one of his family members in his home in Ortega, Tolima department. Colombia Diversa [identified](#) Ramos as a social leader on LGBTQ+ rights with a long history of work in defense of the LGBTQ community.

Indigenous Social Leader Assassinated (Cauca)

On February 10, Indepaz [reported](#) that Eywar Yamid Morán Campo, a social leader and member of the People's Hope Ecomún Multi-Active Cooperative (*Cooperativa Multiactiva Ecomún La Esperanza del Pueblo*) was assassinated. Eywar also led the Indigenous Guard of the Pueblo Nuevo Reservation of Caldono, Cauca (*Guardia Indígena del Resguardo de Pueblo Nuevo de Caldono, Cauca*). He was gunned down by armed men while driving with another Peace Accord signer on the road between Santander de Quilichao and Caldano.

Afro-Colombian Social Leader Killed in Quibdó (Chocó)

On February 20, Indepaz [reported](#) that a volunteer leader of the Civil Defense Committee of Chocó (*Comité de Defensa Civil de Chocó*), Jackson Romaña Cuesta, was killed by armed men in his home in the Obrero neighborhood of Quibdó. Romaña Cuesta helped support the search and rescue of laborers on the Medellín-Quibdó highway and humanitarian emergency support during a recent period of torrential rains. Armed groups that are present in the area include: the AGC, ELN, RPS, Los Mexicanos, Los Locos Yam, and local gangs.

Social Leader Murdered in Santander de Quilichao (Cauca)

On February 22, Indepaz [reported](#) that social leader Víctor Mezu of San Antonio in the Santander de Quilichao municipality was killed in the rural area of the municipality. Mezu was a part of the local government's administrative work in road signage. Groups present in this area are the Dagoberto Ramos Front of the EMC-FARC, Jaime Martínez Front of the EMC-FARC, and local gangs.

Social Leader Killed in Florencia (Caquetá)

On February 23, Indepaz [reported](#) social leader Ludivia Galindez Jiménez was killed in the Ciudadela Siglo XXI neighborhood in the provincial capital of Florencia. Galindez Jiménez was president of the Municipal Association of Community Action Boards of La Montañita (*Asojuntas de la Montañita, ASODEMUC*), women's affairs official for the Communist Party of Colombia (*Partido Comunista de Colombia*), and candidate in the last municipal election. The armed groups present in the area are: 1st Front of the South-Eastern Bloc of the EMC-FARC (*Frente Primero del Bloque Sur Oriental, EMC-FARC*), Second Marquetalia FARC dissidents (*Segunda Marquetalia*), and local



Death Threats and Attacks Against Social Leaders

Human Rights Defenders at High Risk of Harm in Middle Magdalena (Santander)

On January 18, a message signed by the Middle Magdalena Bloc of the EMC-FARC [circulated](#) on WhatsApp declaring six human rights defenders and social leaders in the region “personae non gratae,” including Iván Madero, president of the Regional Corporation for the Defense of Human Rights (*Corporación Regional Para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, CREDHOS*) in Barrancabermeja. This was followed on February 1 by a [statement](#) purportedly from the High Command of the Middle Magdalena Bloc of the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (*Estado Mayor del Bloque Magdalena Medio de las AGC*) threatening the lives social leaders, human rights defenders, and environmental organizations, including CREDHOS and the Federation of Artisanal, Environmentalist, and Tourist Fishermen of the Department of Santander (*Federación de Pescadores Artesanales Ambientalistas y Turísticos del Departamento de Santander, FEDEPESAN*). This constitutes an attempt by armed actors to silence and displace prominent social leaders in the region.

Afro-Colombian Council Members Kidnapped (Valle del Cauca)

On January 22, the Community Council of Black Communities of La Plata, Bahía Málaga (*Consejo Comunitario de las Comunidades Negras de La Plata, Bahía Málaga*) in rural Buenaventura [reported](#) an attempted kidnapping of two community council members. The council members have fled by boat to rural areas near Buenaventura. Council members have received threats since 2006. Communities are being invaded, such as the community Mangaña which has already been seized by armed groups. On January 22, armed groups entered La Plata and the community resisted displacement. The community is under the jurisdiction and military of the Bahía Málaga naval base. The council seeks urgent government protection measures holding the national government, Ministry of Defense/National Navy, and competent authorities accountable.

Female Human Rights Lawyer Facing Threats (Cundinamarca)

Yessika Hoyos, president of the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers’ Collective (*Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo, CAJAR*), [alerted](#) about threatening text message she received on January 22 potentially linked to the group’s legal representation in the unresolved 1996 Mondoñedo massacre case involving state forces in Cundinamarca. CAJAR has faced long-standing persecution for defending human rights, including illegal surveillance by Colombia’s dismantled Administrative Department of Security (*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad, DAS*).



Hoyos highlights the risks faced by human rights defenders in Colombia, where 181 were killed in 2023 according to the ombudsman.

Trade Unionists and Rights Defenders Threatened After JEP Meetings (Cesar)

The NGO Pax Colombia [denounced](#) that on February 1, union leaders and human rights defenders from signatory organizations received threatening text messages declaring them “guerrillas disguised as unionists, peasants, and NGOs” and labeling them military targets. The threats came after participating in territorial technical meetings on Case 08 regarding crimes by state forces and paramilitary groups during the armed conflict held by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (*Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz*, JEP) in Valledupar on January 25 and 26. The organizations condemn the intimidation amid their work supporting victims’ rights to truth and justice and call on authorities to activate protection routes as threats persist against those building peace at the territorial level.

Female Afro-Colombian Leader Under Threat (Valle del Cauca)

On February 11, Vorágine magazine released an article titled *Pacho Malo* on Francisco Martínez Ardila alias “Pacho Malo,” the head of the Technical Investigation Unit (*Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación*, CTI) of the Attorney General’s office in Buenaventura. According to this article, alias “Pacho Malo” was involved in the illegal surveillance of Danelly Estupiñán of the Palenque Congal of the Black Communities Process (PCN) in Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca. Ms. Estupiñán has received death threats and suffered political persecution since 2015.

She played a key role within the Civic Strike Committee of the Buenaventura Strike from May 16 to June 6, 2017. As a result of this she was the victim of 15 incidents that today we know are related to the criminal actions of Mr. Francisco Javier Martínez Ardila, coordinator of the CTI in Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca) known as “Pacho Malo.” Ms. Estupiñán's PCN colleague who also played a key role in the Civic Strike, Mr. Temístocles Machado, was assassinated on January 27, 2018. Ms. Estupiñán has worked with WOLA for nearly two decades and she was one of the key leaders for peace and social justice that we highlighted in our podcast series *Con Líderes Hay Paz* in 2021. We are very concerned for her safety and urge U.S. and Colombian authorities to act to guarantee her safety, as well as, to investigate the information revealed by Vorágine and bring the perpetrators to justice.



At Risk Afro-Colombian Rights Lawyer Left Unprotected (Caribbean Region)

The Guardian [reported](#) on February 15 that Adil Meléndez Márquez was left unprotected by the Colombian State. Shortly after receiving the Sir Henry Brooke award from the Alliance for Lawyers at Risk in the UK for his outstanding human rights work, Mr. Meléndez Márquez was informed that his security measures were removed. Mr. Meléndez Márquez is a prominent human rights lawyer that defends Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities from public, private and illegal actors. He helped temporarily halt the upgrading of the 115km Canal del Dique in the Caribbean region since it violated ethnic communities' right to be previously consulted. As such he's known for defending such communities [from](#) "the privatization of rivers which are the source of life of the Afro-descendent communities". These efforts have led to death threats against his life.

Indigenous Guard Kidnapped (Cauca)

On February 17, the Network for the Defense of Life and Human Rights (*Tejido de Defensa de la Vida y los Derechos Humanos*) [reported](#) that an Indigenous guard, Elkin Junior Pilcu, of the community Corinto was kidnapped. Pilcu served in a humanitarian commission that on Friday, February 16 had rescued a 15-year-old who was forcefully recruited by the EMC-FARC's Dagoberto Ramos Front, said to be responsible for Elkin's kidnapping. Twenty minutes after the rescue, Pilcu was kidnapped and taken towards a mountainous zone. The Indigenous guard had been subject to numerous threats recently, and an attempt was made on Pilcu's life prior to his kidnapping. The Network for the Defense of Life and Human Rights has exhorted the Dagoberto Ramos Front and the national government to work toward his release.

Threats Against Indigenous Leaders (Cauca)

On February 22, the Corporation of Ecofeminist Women (*Corporación de Mujeres Ecofeministas, COMUNITAR*) in Popayán published a statement through a pamphlet that denounces the recent threats against Indigenous women, specifically, Lisina Collazos Yule, and male leaders in Southern Cauca that have declared the threats again these leaders, a military objective. The corporation expresses its solidarity with Collazos Yule, a colleague who has worked for 12 years in distinct social processes that fight against social leader threats. The statement makes an urgent call to the National Government to assist in providing protective measures for her and the community of the Kitek Kiwe Reservation's integrity so that she may continue her leadership.



Nasa Indigenous Leader Victim of False Reporting, (Cauca)

On February 24, the Association of Indigenous Councils of Toribío, Tacueyó, and San Francisco “Proyecto Nasa” (*Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas de Toribío, Tacueyó y San Francisco “Proyecto Nasa”*) [issued](#) a statement rejecting accusations from a Canal 1 journalist linking respected leader from Proyecto Nasa, Alcibiades Escue to an armed group, putting him and the mayor of Toribío at risk. They demand the media outlets immediately rectify this false information that damages reputations and community trust to weaken Indigenous organizations, considering legal and civil actions otherwise. The authorities urge human rights organizations to help clarify the truth and protect the lives and good standing of leaders devoted to peaceful Indigenous rights struggles.

Social Leader and Human Rights Defender Threatened in Girón (Santander)

The Colombia-Europe-United States Coordination–Northeast Node (*Coordinación Colombia-Europa-Estados Unidos Nodo Nororiente*) [condemned](#) the threats received on February 26 by Miguel de la Vega Guzmán, a social leader, human rights defender, and president of the Patriotic Union in the municipality of Girón, Santander. Fifteen days prior, Guzmán was harassed when leaving his office of the National Association of Solidarity Aid (ANDAS) in Bucaramanga. The Coordination demands immediate action from authorities to protect Guzmán’s life, investigate the threats, and ensure he can continue his work safely in the region.

Indigenous Guard Threatened in Florida (Valle del Cauca)

On February 27, the traditional authorities of the Triunfo Cristal Páez Indigenous Reservation (*Resguardo Indígena Triunfo Cristal Páez*) [released](#) a statement that a member of the Indigenous Guard from their community, Arles Audon Mestizo, was confronted by armed men who assaulted him and tied him up. Members of the Indigenous guard had previously noted suspicious figures in the area and were able to reach Mestizo, who was taken to the hospital with injuries. The traditional authorities of Triunfo Cristal Páez demand human rights organizations and the national government pay attention to the situation facing Indigenous communities in the region.

Wayuu Indigenous Leader Falsely Accused in the Press (La Guajira)

On February 28, a journalist with W radio published on her twitter false information regarding Javier Rojas Uriana, Wayuu indigenous leader with the Association for the Traditional Wayuu Authorities, (*Asociación Shipia Wayuu*). Mr. Rojas Uriana, is under death threat due to his work exposing how corruption in La Guajira department contributes to the rights abuses including



the lack of access to water, malnutrition, hunger and death experienced by the indigenous Wayuu communities. His organization petitioned the Organization of American States' Human Rights Commission to issue protective measures for the Wayuu population in La Guajira. In 2016, IPS granted Mr. Rojas Uriana the Letelier Moffit prize for his outstanding work defending indigenous rights. Given Mr. Rojas Uriana's high level of risk such false information contributes to increasing the possibility that he will be harmed.

Abuses Committed Against Rights Defending Government Officials

LGBTQ+ Defender Murdered (Cundinamarca)

On January 22, Carlos Mario Molina, a 59-year-old attorney for the Office of the Inspector General, was found murdered in his Bogotá home, marking the fifth such crime against an LGBTQ+ person registered by the Caribe Afirmativo Human Rights Observatory in Colombia in 2024. Preliminary reports point to asphyxiation as the cause of death, with Molina last communicating with relatives on January 20 before his body was discovered on the 22 after relatives went to check on him. Molina had been [assigned](#) to cases in Florencia, Caquetá at the time of his death.

Afro-Colombian Female Director at Ministry of Agriculture Harassed

On February 21, The National Farmer and Agricultural Convergence (*La Convergencia Nacional Campesina y Agropecuaria*, CNCA) [released](#) a statement expressing support for Nancy Andrea Moreno Lozano, an Afro-Colombian woman who directs the Rural Women's Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and has recently denounced workplace harassment and interference. The coalition firmly denounced what they believe to be discrimination, urging the government to take action against. Seventeen *campesino* and social justice groups signed the statement in support of Moreno Lozano.

Other Incidents and Abuses

Peace Signing Meeting in Huila Ambushed by Armed Group (Huila)

On January 14, in the municipality of Pitalito, Huila department, peace accords signatory José Enrique Roa, accompanied by security, attended a meeting that Indepaz [reported](#) was ambushed by armed group, Ismael Ruiz, one of the fronts for the Major Central State (*Estado Mayor Central*, EMC), a faction group from the original FARC). The illegal armed group was reported to fire shots at José Enrique Roa and his two security escorts. The illegal armed group denies any involvement in the attack.

Armed Group Threats, Extortion Strike Puerto Asís Reserve (Putumayo)

From January 15 to 17, inhabitants of the Perla Amazónica Peasant Reserve Zone (ZRPCA) in Puerto Asís, Putumayo received threatening calls and extortion demands from men claiming to be members of an armed group. The Inter-Ecclesial Commission for Justice and Peace (*Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz*) [reported](#) that at least five reserve residents were targeted, with callers demanding large sums be deposited into a specified savings account while threatening families, generating fear that could lead to displacement. The Border Command (*Comandos de la Frontera*), a Segunda Marquetalia FARC dissident-aligned group, operates in the region, but has denied responsibility.

Alarming Rate of Displacement on Pacific Coast in 2024 (Nariño, Valle del Cauca, Chocó)

Preliminary data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [reported](#) by the Norwegian Refugee Council on January 18 indicates that conflicts have displaced some 3,000 people in the Pacific region so far in 2024, while more than 9,000 people in Chocó were confined to their homes amid threats of violence. Clashes between the EMC-FARC and Second Marquetalia/ELN are responsible for the displacements in Nariño and Valle del Cauca, while confrontations between the ELN and AGC principally affect Chocó.

Explosives Found Near Family Gomes and Schools in Indigenous Territory (Cauca)

On January 18, the Network for the Defense of Life and Human Rights (*Tejido de Defensa de la Vida y los Derechos Humanos*) [reported](#) a cylinder bomb found 20 meters away from a family home in Napolés in the Indigenous territory, Huellas. Another explosive was found near the academic institution, Institucion Educativa Campo Alegre. The Network for the Defense of Life and Human Rights and Cxhab Wala Kiwe, spokesperson from the Association of Indigenous Councils of North Cauca (*Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca*, ACIN) denounces these violent acts and calls for an end to the aggressions and respect for life in the region.

Urgent Search for Missing Indigenous Youth (Cauca)

On January 19, the Network for the Defense of Life and Human Rights (*Tejido de Defensa de la Vida y los Derechos Humanos*) [reported](#) the Luccx Kiwe Thegnas Indigenous Guard was activating an urgent search for 14-year-old Cristian Fabian Pascue Conda. Pascue Conda is from the Indigenous territory of Páez de Corinto and is a member of the Indigenous guard. The organization calls on the EMC-FARC dissidents to respect humanitarian accords and make the



child's whereabouts known. The message calls on the Ombudsman's Office (*Defensoría del Pueblo*), and other human rights organizations to assist in the search for Pascue Conda.

Update on Internal Displacement in 2023

On January 22, the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (*Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento*, CODHES) [published](#) data on internal displacement in Colombia in 2023. Over 63,000 people were displaced, with Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities comprising just over half of those affected. Nariño was the most affected department by far, followed by Valle del Cauca, Bolívar, and Chocó.

Wounaan Indigenous People Denounce Armed Presence, ELN Intimidation (Valle del Cauca)

The Self-Government Council of the Wounaan People of Valle del Cauca (*Consejería de Gobierno Propio del Pueblo Wounaan del Valle del Cauca*, KOWONDEV) [denounced](#) that on February 1, armed ELN guerrillas arrived in the Wounaan indigenous communities of Puerto Pizarro, Unión San Juan, and Puerto Guadualito, painting homes with the group's logos and intimidating residents. The Wounaan people denounce this violation of their autonomy and rights, declaring themselves in confinement and permanent assembly. They call for on-site verification of the situation by national and international human rights organizations, and government agencies specifically: Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Mayor's Office of Buenaventura, Ombudsman's Office, Attorney General's Office, Valle del Cauca Governor's Office, Ministry of Interior, International Red Cross, UNHCR, High Commissioner for Peace, Mayor's Office of Litoral del San Juan, Ombudsman's Office of Litoral del San Juan.

Municipalities Speaking Out Against Armed Group Internal Displacements (Chocó)

On February 10, the Chocó Interethnic Solidarity Forum [reported](#) that 93 people living in Doido, Chocó were internally displaced by the AGC and ELN. The community calls for the Colombian president, armed actors, and the dialogue table (*Mesa de diálogo*) between the National Government and the ELN to take immediate action to confront the humanitarian violence and violation of civilian rights and autonomy in the Chocó region. The community denounces the suffering of ethnic communities in Chocó caused by armed actors territorial disputes and the announcement of the ELN's Armed Strike on the rivers of San Juan, Baudó, Bojayá and others, from February 10, 2024, which infringes physically and culturally on the communities' rights.



Black Community Calls for Respect of Ancestral Lands (Cauca)

On February 13, the Black Community of the Greater Community Council of the Afro-Descendant Captaincy of Páez (*Comunidad Negra del Consejo Comunitario Mayor de Capitanía Afrodescendiente de Páez*) [reported](#) that the issued a public statement regarding their rights and that it should be respected and protected as an ethnic territory under Law 70. They call for the acknowledgement of their community on a national level as a part of Colombia's history, the country's construction, and their historic title.

Ethnic Communities Confined Amid Clashes and Announcement of Armed Strike (Chocó)

On February 19, the Chocó Interethnic Solidarity Forum (*Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó, FISCH*) [shared](#) a video statement manifesting their frustration with the lack of humanitarian aid amid clashes in the subregion of San Juan in the department of Chocó. The community faces confinement and possible forced displacement. Humanitarian resources sent by organizations into San Juan, in Chocó, are not accessible or received due to the conflict. The Chocó Interethnic Solidarity Forum makes an urgent call to action to the negotiations table of the national government to intervene to mitigate the suffering of the local population.

Displacement and Violence in Indigenous Territory (La Guajira)

On February 27, The National Coordination of Indigenous People (*Coordinación Nacional de Pueblos Indígenas, CONPI*) [posted](#) a video statement describing the fear in the Wiwa Indigenous community in Riohacha, La Guajira. Recently, a firefight in the mountains of the community involving around 100 people and an unknown group triggered the displacement of 50 families, mostly from the Wiwa community. The National Coordination of Indigenous People calls out to the state government for assistance by sending state-authorized vehicles to relocate children and others able and others in the community of 387 inhabitants being internally displaced.

Indigenous Authorities Oppose Land Titling Within Ancestral Territories (Cauca)

On February 10, the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (*Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca, CRIC*) and Indigenous authorities from 11 peoples convened an extraordinary meeting, [opposing](#) plans by the national government and land agency to establish peasant reserve zones, collective territories, or other figures within ancestral lands. Indigenous leaders call for state commitments made under the peace accords' ethnic chapter and Law 70 of 1993 recognizing their territorial rights when titling areas for Afro-Colombian communal councils.



Advocacy for Human Rights in the Americas

False Positives Victim Accuses Over 200 Officials of Conspiracy (Antioquia)

On February 26, Alexander Obregón Rentería, victim of a legal “false positive,” [denounced](#) over 200 officials he believes conspired to wrongfully convict him through fabricated evidence and false testimonies, particularly from Jairo Pérez Luna, recently sentenced for related crimes. Obregón named prosecutors, judges, lawyers, and police officers, accusing them of acts like manipulating evidence, falsifying documents, committing perjury, and obstructing investigations. He asserts they coordinated with Pérez Luna’s criminal group to frame him without proof, leading to over a year's imprisonment in 2015-2016 despite lacking evidence tying him to illegal groups. Obregón sees Pérez Luna's conviction unraveling the alleged conspiracy and urgently calls for investigations.

We thank you in advance for your efforts. Please feel free to contact me at gsanchez@wola.org to discuss any of the issues raised in this letter.

Respectfully,

Gimena Sánchez-Garzoli
Director for the Andes
WOLA