July 15, 2024

Intimidation of San José de Julumito Indigenous Community and Its Legal Representation Should Be Investigated

Colombia Peace Accord NGO and the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) express our deep concern for the physical safety of indigenous leader Fabián Andrés Sánchez-Maíz of the community of San José de Julumito and attorney Sofía López of the Justice and Dignity Corporation. In July, they were subjected to intimidation, followings, and harassment. The latest incident occurred today, July 15, after the prosecutor Diana Ramírez Obando, from the 12th Local Prosecutor's Office, called the indigenous community of San José de Julumito to conciliation proceedings with the businessmen Luis Lucero, Aureliano Guzmán and Fernando Vargas.

In June, leader Fabián Andrés Sánchez-Maíz and his family were victims of forced internal displacement after a threatening vehicle containing armed people wearing bulletproof vests was placed in front of their residence. The vehicle in question is allegedly part of Blinsecurity de Colombia LTD. Other vehicles belonging to that company were part of the other acts of intimidation against members of the indigenous community and lawyer López. The victims of harassment by this security company are peace defenders in the department of Cauca who have no protection mechanisms.

We demand an end to the threats, surveillance, and harassment against the indigenous leadership of San José de Julumito and Sofía López. The judicial authorities should immediately investigate the events concerning Blinsecurity de Colombia LTD. The Superintendence of Industry and Commerce should suspend all activities related to this company until the facts of persecution against these leaders are clarified. The U.S. government should intervene to ensure the protection of the victims of harassment and the Indigenous community.

For further information, contact us at colombiacuerdodepaz@gmail.com