



Ladies, Gentlemen, Esteemed Representatives,  
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN COLOMBIA,  
COOPERATION AGENCIES,  
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

Cordial Greetings,

Thank you for hearing the SOS BUENAVENTURA call.

The victims' association Communities Building Peace in Colombia - CONPAZCOL - is a network of victims and communities that, under proposals of civil resistance, restoration and reconciliation, have become subjects of rights. Our network is made up of Afro-descendant, indigenous and peasant processes and communities; women, men and the LGTBIQ population who inhabit rural and urban territories where both intensity of the conflict and investment have developed.

*If in the city it rains, in the countryside there is a storm  
Through terror and fear, silence is imposed on Buenaventura*

Cases of threats, murders, forced disappearances, recruitment of children and youth, trafficking and sexual exploitation of women, forced displacement and confinement, dispossession of territory: all this has increased exponentially in the territories of the Mid-Pacific region in Colombia, and in particular in the rural ethnic territories that are part of our association, Communities Building Peace in Colombia – CONPAZCOL. We have witnessed this grim reality in the strategic corridor of Bajo Naya, Bajo San Juan and Bajo Calima, as well as in the urban area of the Buenaventura district, such as the La Gloria community council in Commune 12, the Punta Icaico Humanitarian Space in Commune 4, the La Esperanza Community Council at kilometer 23 via Buenaventura to Cali, and the Wounan Phobor council. These community-based processes continue to resist terror, without minimum guarantees from the Colombian State, to denounce and activate routes of access to justice, to search for the disappeared and prevent new

victimizing acts, all things they must do as a result of the imposed level of terror and fear despite being territories with the permanent presence of public forces.

## **CONTEXT IN DETAIL:**

After the signing of the Peace Accords designed to end the conflict and to build a stable and lasting peace in Colombia in 2016 and after the signing of the Civic Strike Agreement to Live with Dignity in Buenaventura in 2017, the CONPAZCOL processes have been revictimized. The following outlines details of concrete events.

There has been an increase in militarization in ethnic territories, as has occurred in the lower Naya, militarized since 2002 in response to the Protection Measures by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and then again with the Horus Plan and the Atlanta operation after the Peace Accords. This has occurred at the same time that successor structures of paramilitarism entered the territory, such as the Urban Forces of the Pacific (*Fuerza Urbana del Pacífico* or *FUP*) and the self-named Jaime Martínez dissidence. Publicly, the Naya territory and its residents were stigmatized by being labeled drug traffickers in “the hidden route of cocaine,” according to a documentary produced by the media organization *Pacifista*.<sup>1</sup>

The forced disappearance of the brothers Obdulio Ángulo Zamora, Simeón Olave Ángulo, Hermes Ángulo Zamora occurred on April 17, 2018 in the collective territory of the Naya River Community Council, as well as the abduction and subsequent disappearance of the leader Iver Ángulo Zamora, which occurred on May 5 of the same year. Iver Ángulo Zamora’s disappearance occurred while he was being accompanied by the Ombudsman’s Office, which provided protection to leave the territory. In these cases, an urgent search route was activated and to date there have been no results.

The impunity surrounding these events and the terror imposed in this strategic corridor where, in addition to the successor structures of paramilitarism, public forces maintain a permanent presence, has meant the silence (not reporting) of forced disappearances. The exact figure remains uncertain but is estimated to exceed 30 cases of local people disappeared in the territory since the signing of the Peace Accords in 2016. There are additional cases of people who reached or were coerced to the Naya corridor and were then victims of forced disappearance or murder, especially refugee women in Colombia. There are also cases of people from the city of Buenaventura who were last seen in the Naya region. One of the most recent events occurred on December 24, 2020, when heavily armed men, in full view of the entire town, handcuffed a young man and took him away from the central settlement of Puerto Merizalde. As of the writing of this letter the young man’s whereabouts remain unknown.

On January 13, 2017, social leader and human rights defender Emilsen Manyoma Mosquera, from the collective territory of Bajo Calima, was murdered together with her husband José Javier

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNbjrVou82g>

Rodallega. On November 2, 2017, Jefferson Pretel of the Community Council of Bajo San Juan was murdered. This occurred after the forced displacement of the entire community.

Since the signing of the Peace Accords, around 20 people have been killed in the lower Naya region. Another 15 people have lost their lives as a result of the accidents caused by speedboats.

In the 4 years since the Accords, according to testimonies of leaders, parents and educators, the recruitment of children, adolescents and young people remains alarmingly high. Many are recruited as part of the informant network, for logistical support, to be in charge of the collection of extortions and are given weapons within the illegal structures that control strategic corridors for illegal economies and business interests. The numbers exceed those recruited in 20 years of armed conflict with the FAR- EP guerrillas. This fact has multiplied the cases of gradual and silent displacement of many families, leaving to protect their sons and daughters.

Cases of threats to leaders and ethnic authorities in our CONPAZCOL network are increasing. They are threatened for affirming ethnic-territorial rights, for promoting humanitarian mechanisms for the protection of life, and for demanding the implementation of the Final Peace Accords and the Civic Strike agreement.

Among the threats received, reported and for which there is no response whatsoever in terms of protection and prevention, we have:

The threats against JOSE CRESENCIO ÁNGULO ANGULO, president of the Naya River Community Council, legal representative of the ethnic association Dignified Paths (*Caminos de Dignidad – ASOECAD*), director of the National Coordination for Growers of Coca, Poppy and Marihuana (COCCAM) and national spokesperson of the CONPAZCOL network. He had to forcibly displace on January 27, 2021, despite being protected with precautionary measures from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and having made the respective complaints. To date, the UNP has not assigned an emergency preventive protocol consistent with his level of risk, which is implemented while the CERREM committee completes the ongoing risk analysis.

The threats against the leader NIDIRIA RUIZ MEDINA, of the AINI Women's Association, from the collective territory of the Naya River, for insisting on the process of searching for more than 60 disappeared persons within the framework of the SIVJRN. She has also led the process of public recognition of responsibility and reconciliation with the Los Comunas party within the framework of the Peace Accords and demanded the implementation of the Peace Accords and the Civic Strike agreement. Although the UNP advanced with a risk study, CERREM determined that her risk did not merit a protection scheme.

The threats against MARIA EUGENIA MOSQUERA RIASCOS, legal representative of CONPAZCOL, threatened for her work as a social leader, human rights defender, member of the Access to Justice, Victims, Protection and Memory Committee of the Civic Strike, member of the National Ethnic Coordination for Peace (CENPAZ). The threats occurred at a time when progress is being made on the report to the Truth Commission on the effects of the armed conflict within the framework of the ethnic chapter, and at a time when the process of restitution of the La Esperanza Community Council's territory is moving forward. The La Esperanza

community are victims of ecocide, dispossession and forced displacement. To date, the UNP has not ordered any preventive measure to protect the life and integrity of María Eugenia and her family.

The lack of protection by the national government, directed by the UNP and the CERREM committee, is complimented by the incoherent cutback of measures to several CONPAZCOL leaders, including Mr. MANUEL HERIBERTO BECERRA ROSERO, legal representative of the La Esperanza Community Council. Amid many risks, he leads with his community the process of restitution of the collective territory where ecocide and dispossession has increased, despite the fact that a land restitution judge in Cali ordered a precautionary protective measure 4 years ago.

The protection measures for the leader ISABELINO VALENCIA RODALLEGA were also reduced, ignoring the context of violence in Buenaventura and especially the Naya River. He serves as advisor of the Naya Community Council and spokesperson for the CONPAZCOL network. The current protective measures have been reduced to a protective vest, that cannot be used in this context, and a telephone that only has cell service when in urban areas.

Similarly, we are concerned by the UNP's reduction of the measures for ENRIQUE CHIMONJA COY, director of the CONPAZCOL network, advisor to the AINI Women's Association, companion and advisor to the La Esperanza Community Council, the Cabecera Community Council in Bajo San Juan, the Punta Icao Humanitarian Space, and to the Puente Nayero Humanitarian Space in the La Playita neighborhood.

In addition to the vulnerability in which leaders and human rights defenders find themselves due to the absence of effective and coherent measures by the UNP, and the evident intentional damage to an ethnic territory where the routes of collective protection have seen no successful results, the lack of political will of the national government to comply with the final Peace Accords is a matter of great concern. This is demonstrated by the failure to begin dismantling the successor structures of paramilitarism in Buenaventura and Tumaco, the lack of will to comply with the Civic Strike agreement and, given the context of violence and escalation of the conflict in the Mid-Pacific region, the absence of political will to implement an action plan that prioritizes the social and not militarization.

On the issue of forced displacement, there is concern about the increase in families that have been obligated to leave their rural or urban territories to protect life, avoid extortion and protect children and youth from being recruited. There is also an absence of will by the national government. to expedite plans for return, as is the case with the La Esperanza Community Council, and relocations such as that of the Wounan Phobor Council, forcibly displaced since 2003 when the AUC -Calima Block entered.

#### **WE REQUEST:**

- The national government effectively and comprehensively complies with the implementation of the final Peace Accords, prioritizing what was agreed upon with respect to the effective

dismantling of the successor structures of paramilitarism present in Buenaventura and Tumaco, as well as the reactivation of negotiations with the ELN.

- The national government follows up and immediately complies with the Civic Strike agreement, giving priority to individual and collective protection issues.
- The Attorney General's Office takes necessary action to overcome impunity for serious human rights violations, impunity that is augmented by the context of terror and fear prevailing in the territories.
- That the national government guarantee the work of the institutions in the Integral System for Truth, Justice, Reconciliation, and No Repetition (SIVJRNR) to continue efforts in preparing reports for the Truth Commission, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, and the search for disappeared persons.
- Faced with the humanitarian situation and the current context of violence, priority should be given to an emergency plan with comprehensive social interventions, instead of increasing the presence of public forces, given the evident levels of corruption.