



Alert

Aproximately 5.000 people at risk of displacement due to confrontations between Farc dissidencies and Marine Infantry in Timbiquí - Cauca

We alert national and international public opinion of the critical condition facing the civil population right now in the territories of the lower part of the Saija River, rural area of the municipality of Timbiquí, Pacific Coast of Cauca, as a result of armed confrontations between dissidents of the Farc and Marine Infantry of Battalion No. 42. This situation began in the early hours of this morning Saturday April 24. We warn that the situation risks causing the mass displacement of around 5.000 people.

We reiterate: As a social process we defend the ethnic-territorial human rights of the black communities of the Pacific Coast of Cauca. In defence of these rights we issue our information, for which we take sole responsibility. Below we narrate some of the most recent events:

April 24, 2021

At approximately 1:30 am, nine vessels of the Marine Corps No. 42 went up the Saija River, apparently reaching the Boca de Patía community in the Lower Part of the territory of the Saija River Community Council.

Around 3:00 a.m., a small plane was heard flying overhead and at dawn, when the Infantry boats began to come down, there was a loud detonation and several bursts of gunfire in the area between the Santa Rosa Street Indigenous Reserve and the Lower Part of the territory of the Saija River Community Council; a Navy helicopter flew over the area for more than half an hour. The communities directly affected by the confrontations are: the communities of Calle Santa Rosa, La Sierpe, La Unión Málaga and Las Peñas del Resguardo Indígena Calle Santa Rosa (approximately 1.000 people) and the communities of Camarones (vereda Sándal), La Herradura, Puerto Saija, San Francisco and Nueva Esperanza of the Lower Part of the Saija River Community Council (4.000 people approximately).

On several occasions we have warned about the risk facing the communities in this area and the constant humanitarian crisis that plagues the Pacific Coast of Cauca – most recently on March 24. It is worrying that the cries for justice and peace in this region continue to be ignored by an indolent government which prefers war and devastation over life. Between 19 and 22 April 2021, we toured these same territories of the Saija River with the Humanitarian River Caravan for Life and Peace, in order to send a message of the sacredness of life and reiterate our commitment to peace in the territories of the Pacific Coast of the Cauca. We heard hundreds of brave voices that, despite the violence and intimidation, every day strive for life and peace, social justice and real opportunities in the Colombian Pacific, and who yearn for nothing more than to be heard and taken seriously by this Government that shuts them up, lies to them and fails to comply with them.

Faced with this situation which was evidenced in this week's journey, the Humanitarian Fluvial Caravan for Life and Peace raised the following demands, both to the illegal armed actors and to the Colombian state:

1. Make humanitarian agreements with the various armed actors that are present and exercise control in the ethnic territories, in order to alleviate the humanitarian crisis situation experienced by the populations on the Pacific coast of Cauca.



2. Advance in peace talks with armed actors, which allows a political solution to the armed conflict.
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4. Respect and comply with the social agreements agreed between sectors of society and the State, as well as full compliance with the Peace Agreement, in response to the demands of the inhabitants of the Pacific.
5. Continue working for the consolidation of life and the construction of peace based on our own ancestral traditions and cultural values.
6. Continue navigating our territory's as a spiritual nourishment of joy, coexistence and reconciliation together based on the legacy of the African principle of Ubuntu: "I am because we are".
7. Support compliance with the recommendations emanating from the early warnings issued by the Ombudsman's Office (Defensoria del Pueblo) and the prompt application of ILO Convention 169 (free and informed prior consultation), Law 70, and the recommendations of the constitutional court, measures that the community has waited for more than three decades to be applied
8. Promote municipal and departmental commitments in matters of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights that allow overcoming structural racism and the serious problems of social exclusion that communities face.
9. We trust that this call will reach the United Nations High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet, the IACHR Executive Secretary María Claudia Pulido, the President of the International Red Cross Peter Maurer and the diplomatic corps present in Colombia so that based on their mandates they demand to the Colombian State not to continue delaying the fulfillment of the peace accords with the FARC and the reactivation of the Dialogues with the ELN.

We reject any act that degrades and threatens the existence the territories of the Pacific Coast of Cauca. Black and indigenous lives matter.

Based on all of the above

we urge:

- the **dissidents of the Farc and the ELN**, the immediate cessation of all belligerent operations, threats and intimidation.
- **state forces**, when carrying out military operations not to endanger the civilian population and to fully respect International Humanitarian Law.
- the **National System of Attention and Comprehensive Reparation to Victims and the National Victims Unit** to take measures to provide attention and protection for victims.
- the **Ombudsman (Defensor del Pueblo), Carlos Camargo Assis, and the Delegate Attorney for Ethnic Affairs**, the activation of the route of assistance and attention to the victims of the armed conflict, as well as the undertaking of actions that allow the advancement of necessary, adequate, appropriate and differential



protection measures for the ethnic communities at risk, as ordered by the Constitutional Court in Auto 005 of 2009.

- the **governor of Cauca, Elías Larrahondo and the mayor of Timbiquí, Neyla Yadira Amú Venté** to protect the communities of the Pacific Coast of Cauca, also to support and facilitate the actions of the corresponding authorities, which allow them to avoid damage to the civilian population, under compliance with International Humanitarian Law.
- to **State agencies, national and international organisations**, to our allies, to address this humanitarian crisis that is being experienced on the Pacific Coast of Cauca, also to be attentive to events and prevent this situation from progressing and the continued violation of fundamental human rights and collective territorial rights.

The COCOCAUCA Regional does not belong to any armed group and does not participate in any way in the armed actions of the parties in conflict, such as state forces, the insurgencies or any other type of armed actor. As Regional COCOCAUCA we advocate for peace with social justice, as a substantial foundation to continue existing as an ethnic group. We reject violence and demand that the lives of the inhabitants be respected.

Guapi, Pacific Coast of Cauca, April 24, 2021

Regional COCOCAUCA