

URGENT ACTION

SEVERAL INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS THREATENED

The National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) reported that several threatening pamphlets against indigenous organizations defending human rights were found on the streets and railroad tracks of the municipality of Uribia in the department of La Guajira, north of Colombia.

On 10 October, several threatening pamphlets against indigenous organizations that defend human rights were found on the streets and railroad tracks of the municipality of Uribia in the department of La Guajira, north of Colombia.

The threatening pamphlets were directed against representatives of the following indigenous organizations of La Guajira: Wayuu Nation (Wayúu Nación), Wayúu Aararrayu, Wayuu Women's Force Observatory (Observatorio Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu) and ONIC. In its public statement, ONIC accused the paramilitary group Black Eagles (Águilas Negras in Spanish), of which the local armed group in the region is known as Bloque Capital, to have issued the pamphlets.

The pamphlets literally stated that organizations defending human rights in the department of La Guajira "hinder the development of the country" and threatened that they will be attacked.

This occurred a few days before the follow up hearing between the Constitutional Court and the Attorney General's Office due to evaluate Colombia's government compliance with Ruling T-302 of 2017, which corroborated the mass and systematic violation of the fundamental rights of the Wayúu Indigenous People.

These indigenous organizations have previously received several threats as they constantly denounce the lack of guarantees to the right to life, health, education, clean water, territory, land and a healthy environment in the region.

Please write immediately in Spanish, or your own language, to the Colombian authorities:

- Urging them to conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of the threats against these indigenous human rights organizations, and bring all those found responsible to justice;
- Urging them to fully and immediately implement the collective Prevention and Protection Plan for this indigenous organizations, taking into account the previous consultation about the measures;
- Demanding them to take immediate steps to overcome the structural causes behind the threats and attacks faced by human rights defenders in the context of their work in defence of human rights guarantees for Wayuu Indigenous People in La Guajira.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 NOVEMBER 2018 TO:

Attorney General

Nestor Humberto Martinez
Fiscal General de Colombia
Diagonal 22B No. 52-01
Bogotá, D.C., Colombia
Email: contacto@fiscalia.gov.co,
denuncie@fiscalia.gov.co,
despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Ministry of Interior

Nancy Patricia Gutiérrez
Ministra del Interior
Calle 12 B No. 8 – 46
Bogotá D.C., Colombia
E-mail:
servicioalciudadano@mininterior.gov.co
Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Defensoría del Pueblo
Carlos Negret
Carrera 9 Núm.16 – 21
Bogotá D. C., Colombia
Email:
asuntosdefensor@defensoria.gov.co
Salutation: Dear Ombudsperson

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax number Email address Salutation

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The department of La Guajira, located in northern Colombia, is characterized by having the largest desert area in the country and wealth of natural resources such as coal, gas, salt, as well as a number of wind energy farms. However, drinking water is scarce in the region, the infrastructure of public services is weak, and, above all, children of the Wayúu Indigenous People that inhabit this territory lack food security.

In 2016, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) reported that 4,770 children of the Wayúu Indigenous People died due to problems associated with malnutrition and lack of drinking water since 2008. Currently, the department of La Guajira has the highest number of infant mortality due to malnutrition in children under five years of age in Colombia. In 2017, the Constitutional Court issued an “Unconstitutional State of Affairs” (“Estado de Cosas Inconstitucional”, ECI), citing the massive and systematic violations of human rights of Wayúu Indigenous People in La Guajira, and the weak institutional response in terms of assistance. However, one year later, this situation does not appear to have changed. On the contrary, there has been little progress.

The indigenous organizations Nación Wayúu, Wayúu Araurayu, Observatorio Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu and the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) have been denouncing the lack of compliance from the local and departmental authorities to guarantee the rights of the Wayúu Indigenous People.

They have also decried the constant threat that the presence of armed actors in their territories represents. With regard to measures for the collective protection of communities at risk, the needs in reality seem to have overtaken the measures provided by the state to deal with the conflict. Currently, the protection mechanism in charge of the National Protection Unit faces several challenges as a result of the rise in the number of human rights defenders killed since 2016. In a report published in November 2017, Amnesty International reiterated the need to strengthen collective protection mechanisms and to guarantee the safety of human rights defenders, especially those working in rural areas and defending the land, territory and the environment, based on consultation with the communities at risk.

Name: N/A

Gender m/f: Male and female

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