

Colombia clamors for Life, Justice, and Peace

October 09, 2020

**"In the name of God and of these suffering people, whose cries rise to heaven and are more and more tumultuous by the day, I beg you, I plead with you, I order you, in the name of God: Stop the repression"
(Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero).**

Women, men, and all genders, organizations and communities, those who defend life, those who believe in social justice and the dignity of the people- who have signed this declaration- wish to express our profound pain in the face of the systems of death that are becoming increasingly entrenched in the reality of the Colombian population.

In the midst of fear, terror, misery and hopelessness we declare:

Since the signing of the Final Peace Agreement between the ex-guerrilla of the FARC-EP and the Colombian government in November 2016 through August of this year, 1000 people have been assassinated: leaders of indigenous, peasant, and afro-descendant communities and human rights defenders. Also, 227 people who signed the Peace Agreement have been murdered, figures published recently by the Institute of Studies for Development and Peace (INDEPAZ). However, the number could be greater due to under-recording.

According to Indepaz, through September 21 of this year, 246 people have been killed in 61 massacres. Among the victims, there are a considerable number of young people. Most of the territories where they have occurred coincide with the sites where there is a presence of Armed Forces.

The escalation of the conflict has been taking place in the midst of measures of isolation and restriction due to the health crisis of Covid-19, which has also generated an increased poverty in Colombia.

The President of the Colombia, making use of his constitutional powers in the midst of the health crisis by Covid-19, has issued more than 1180 decrees. Not all of them are related to Covid-19, and weaken the access to Fundamental Human Rights

(health, social security, labor, among others), favoring the big national and international capitals.

Social mobilization and protest actions have been violently repressed by the government, and stigmatization, accusations and persecution are increasing. An homage to the doctrine of the internal enemy.

During the protests in response to the killing of the law student Javier Ordoñez at the hands of the National Police, 13 people were also murdered by police according to MOVICE.

The national polarization that exists from the paralyzed implementation of the agreement with the FARC is evident. It is also urgent to continue the dialogue with the ELN. The political and economic forces of the Iván Duque government affirm that there are no resources for implementation, and in fact hold that the final agreement as a sort of “impunity pact” between the two sides. In contrast, sectors of the victims, social organizations, some political parties, and economic and even military sectors demand compliance with and implementation of the Peace Accord as a historic opportunity to tell the truth and achieve the changes and transformations that Colombia requires.

The current administration is making progress in establishing a government with dictatorial characteristics by trying to put an end to the courts, concentrating efforts on militarizing the territories as the only form of security, approving the presence of the United States military in Colombia without having gone through the approval of the Colombian Congress, and attacking judicial decisions from the executive.

Today we want to speak to Pope Francisco, to the World Council of Churches, to the different reports of the United Nations and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights who should know what is happening here. We also want to speak to the countries that are guarantors of the Peace Agreement in Colombia, to the Lutheran World Federation, to the World Reformed Communion, to people like Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky, and, to all of them, who can call for life and peace in Colombia.

Against this backdrop, we invite you to join us in our clamor:

For the government of Colombia to generate the necessary conditions to guarantee the sacred right to life: to prevent and stop the assassination of social leaders, human rights defenders and signatories of the final peace agreement.

To make visible the collapse of the rule of law and that the bloodshed in Colombia be publicized

For the balance of power be maintained for a true social democracy based on the rule of law

For a purge and restructuring of the military and police forces

For the Colombian government to have the political will to authentically dismantle of paramilitary successor structures and to reestablish the talks with the ELN guerrillas.

We ask that visibility be given to what is happening and worsening in our territories, such as confinement and forced displacement, effects of anti-personnel mines, economic blockades, stigmatization, territorial dispossession, environmental damage, and extractive activities.

We invite you to send letters to the Colombian government, to immediately advance a humanitarian agreement that will stop the escalation of the conflict.

We request the departure of the United States military from Colombian territory. In the face of such a difficult situation, we ask you to have ready large scale the monitoring mechanisms, early warnings systems, and political advocacy strategies to help us support alternative ways of living, and so that we can overcome this situation that our country is experiencing.

For Life, Justice and Peace in Colombia!

Alianza CONVIDA20, CONPAZCOL, Mesa Ecuánica por la Paz, FOR Presente por la Paz, De la Guerra a la Paz, Peacebuilding, Non-Violence and Demilitarization Commission, Fundación Pueblo Indio del Ecuador, SICSAL, SOA Watch

Firmas/Signature

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Asociación de Pequeños Productores, ASOPROA

Asociación PIWAM

Asociación Tierra para Todos, Inclusión Social

Asuntos Femeninos y de la familia

Centro Cívico San Javier

Coalición de Movimientos y Organizaciones

Sociales de Colombia - COMOSOC

Colectivo de Mujeres Tejiendo Red

Colombia Humana

Compañía de María

Comunidad de Vida y Trabajo La Balsita

Consejo Comunitario Casimiro Meza Mendoza

Consejo Comunitario Juntas del Tamaná - COCOLOJU -

Consejo Comunitario la Esperanza, Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca

Consejo Municipal de Paz, Reconciliación y Convivencia, Dabeiba, Antioquia

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Corporación Cultural Colombo Cubana

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Fundación Hogar Pastorin

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Mesa de Víctimas, Dabeiba, Antioquia

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Novo Producciones SAS

Organización Cavidad

Partido FARC

Red Ambiental

Red Local de Paz y Reconciliación

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Somos Más, PDA

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