

UA 178/17, **UPDATE 3**, AI Index: AMR 23/7548/2017 of 5 December 2017.

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COLOMBIA: CONFINED COMMUNITIES IN RIOSUCIO, CHOCÓ

Several Embera Indigenous communities and the Afro-descendent community of Taparal in the department of Chocó, Colombia, find themselves confined and terrified due to the presence of the Gaitanistas Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, AGC), and due to the possibility of them clashing with the National Liberation Army (Ejército De Liberación Nacional, ELN) in their communities.

The Dialogue and Consultation Roundtable of the Indigenous Peoples of Chocó (Mesa de Diálogo y Concertación de los Pueblos Indígenas del Chocó) reported to Amnesty International that on 2 December, more than 100 members of the paramilitary group known as the Gaitanistas Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AGC) made an incursion into the Pichindé Indigenous community of the Embera peoples. This community is located on the Taparal river, which flows off of the Chintadó river, in the municipality of Riosucio, Chocó. The Pichindé community is made up of 260 inhabitants, from 54 families, who find themselves confined after being intimidated by the armed group.



There are two other Indigenous communities on the Chintadó river: Marcial, with 308 inhabitants from 75 families, and Jagual, with around 460 inhabitants from 100 families. The Afro-descendent community of Taparal is also located close to there and has around 380 inhabitants from approximately 50 families. These communities are currently confined and are fearful that clashes between the AGC and the National Liberation Army, whose presence in the territory has been increasing, could possibly occur. This situation has already been reported to the competent authorities, and it is urgent that they activate security and support mechanisms for the communities at risk. They must also take concrete actions to protect and support communities in light of the possible displacement of these rivers' inhabitants.

Please send an urgent letter, email or fax without delay!

* Demand a comprehensive State presence responsible for guaranteeing the rights to life, integrity and security of Indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples in at-risk areas in Chocó due to the presence of armed groups.

* Call for immediate collective protection measures for these communities, which guarantee the life and integrity of Indigenous and Afro-descendent leaders and community members, based on consultation with these individuals and in accordance with their wishes.

* Request a comprehensive State response in order to execute prevention and protection plans for displaced Indigenous communities, or those at risk of forced displacement, in compliance with Decree 004 from 2009 of the Constitutional Court.

Here are the contact details you will require:

President

Juan Manuel Santos
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño,
Carrera 8 No.7-26 Bogotá,
Colombia
Email: contacto@presidencia.gov.co
Salutation: Dear Mr. President/
Estimado Señor Presidente

Director of Unit for Attention and Reparation
of Victims

Yolanda Pinto
Calle 16 # 6-66. Edificio Avianca Piso 19
Bogotá, Colombia
Fax: 011 57 1 4261111
Salutation: Dear Mrs. Director/
Estimada Señora Directora

Please send a copy to:

Ombudsperson

Mr. Carlos Alfonso Negret
Carrera 9 Núm.16 - 21
Bogotá D. C., Colombia
Email: Asuntosdefensor@defensoria.gov.co

His Excellency Nicolás Lloreda Ricaurte
Ambassador for Colombia
360 Albert Street, Suite 1002
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7X7
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has been publicly condemning the increase in displacement and confinement of ethnic communities in Chocó. These continued violations of human rights underscore one of the main obstacles to implementing the peace process: the protection of communities that live in the areas most affected by the armed conflict and the need to guarantee that these deplorable acts do not go unpunished (more information at <https://www.amnesty.org/es/latest/news/2017/11/la-encrucijada-colombiana-a-un-ano-de-la-paz/> - only available in Spanish).

On 22 November, Amnesty International published a report on the human rights situation and guarantees of non-repetition in the department of Chocó, which is called The Years of Solitude

Continue: The Peace Agreement and Guarantees of Non-Repetition in Chocó (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr23/7425/2017/en/>), and it launched a petition to the President of Colombia requesting that he provide individual and collective protection to the Indigenous and Afro-descendent communities of Chocó who are at risk (see the petition at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/protect-ethnic-communities-from-violence-and-abuse-in-colombia/>).

In the first half of 2017, the Indigenous Peoples of Chocó denounced at least two paramilitary incursions in their territories. The first took place on 6 March and caused massive displacement of families and the confinement of communities nearby in Peña Azul (more information at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR23/5826/2017/en/>). The second took place on 18 April in the collective territory of Jiguamiandó, close to the Humanitarian Zone of Pueblo Nuevo (more information at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR23/6082/2017/en/>).

In the department of Chocó, crimes under international law and violations of human rights persist, including the targeted killings of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian community members, forced collective displacement, confinement of communities, and forced recruitment of children.

The Indigenous Peoples of Chocó live with continuous threats and acts of violence on the parts of armed groups and paramilitaries; for this reason, in 2009, the Constitutional Court of Colombia issued Decree 004, in which it urged the Colombian government to take measures, focused on ethnicity, in order to design and develop a public policy on forced displacement, aimed at protecting life, freedom and cultural diversity, among other rights.