

COLOMBIA DELEGATION

Solidarity with Campesinxs

June 24-July 4, 2020

El Magdalena Medio is a region rich in renewable and non-renewable natural resources. Due to its richness and strategic position in the country, the city of Barrancabermeja and the Magdalena Medio region have suffered high levels of violence. Massacres and forced displacements left whole communities uprooted where criminal interests have taken advantage to forcibly seize lands for their own economic projects.



Delegation participants will:

- Meet with human rights defenders and rural organizers
- Learn how national agrarian policies violate the human rights of campesinxs*
- Learn how the legacy of the 50-year armed conflict continues to haunt campesinxs through forced displacement, assassinations, and lack of access to fair judicial processes
- See how armed groups and paramilitaries control Barrancabermeja and the region and how high levels of unemployment and poverty push young people who see few other options but to get involved with these groups
- Listen to powerful stories of resistance of campesinxs and leave Colombia inspired to take action in solidarity
- Gain the knowledge and skills necessary to return to the United States and advocate against harmful US policies, striving for new policies that uplift human rights and support Colombian communities on the ground.

*campesinxs = campesinos & campesinas

Spanish language ability is not required.

Applications due May 26. Cost = \$1300 plus airfare

Some scholarship money might be available. Inquire.

For information and application:

@IRTFcleveland www.IRTFcleveland.org facebook.com/irtf1981
216.961.0003



Christian Peacemaker Teams

CPT places teams at the invitation of local peacemaking communities that are confronting situations of lethal conflict. These teams **support and amplify the voices of local peacemakers** who risk injury and death by waging nonviolent direct action to confront systems of violence and oppression.

CPT work includes:

- accompanying our partners as they work nonviolently to defend their rights and communities.
- advocacy; amplifying the stories and voices of those experiencing violent oppression.
- human rights observation and reporting.
- solidarity networking; partnering with individuals and organizations to work toward change.

CPT understands **violence to be rooted in systemic structures of oppression**. We are committed to undoing oppressions, starting within our own lives and in the practices of our organization.

CPT **enlists spiritual communities and individuals in an organized, nonviolent alternative to war**. CPT's initial roots among Mennonites, Church of the Brethren and Quakers have spread into a broad ecumenical network that supports spiritually-centered peacemaking, creative public witness, nonviolent direct action, and protection of human rights.

About Marcos Knoblauch, team member of CPT-Colombia, who visited Cleveland in November 2018

Marcos received an Aeronautical Engineering degree from The National University of La Plata (NULP) (Argentina) in 2006, a master's degree in Space and Aeronautics after studying in Germany, UK and France 2009-2011, and a master's degree in human rights from The National University of La Plata in 2016. He worked as teacher and researcher in applied sciences, in the field of space technology at NULP till 2016. He has worked extensively in the defense of human rights with marginalized communities in his country and in regions where armed conflict is present and under military occupation. He volunteered with grassroots social organizations in his city, accompanying land and human rights defense processes from a psycho social and legal perspective. Marcos' first contact with CPT was in 2013 during his 3-month service with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel - EAPPI (www.eappi.org), an ecumenical initiative of the World Council of Churches (www.oimoumene.org). He served with the EAPPI team in the city of Hebron where CPT has had a continuous presence since 1995. The two organizations cooperate in daily tasks, accompaniment, and monitoring human rights abuses. He then coordinated the EAPPI committee in Argentina and represented it at the WCC (2014 to 2017).

[1] <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/may/01/2017-deadliest-year-on-record-colombian-human-rights-defenders>

[2] <https://pbicolombia.org/cahucopana/>

IRTF (InterReligious Task Force on Central America & Colombia) is a solidarity organization that brings people together from various faith and secular communities to act in solidarity with oppressed peoples in southern Mexico, Central America, and Colombia through consciousness-raising and advocacy

IRTF's solidarity mission includes:

- protesting **urgent human rights abuse cases**
- working to end US military training and equipment for **civilian-targeted warfare**
- advocating for an end to the **armed violence in Colombia** and an inclusive and comprehensive peace and reconciliation process
- supporting people's **pro-democracy movements**
- joining with indigenous & Afro-descendant communities to **protect their lands and cultures**
- protesting **institutionalized racism** and **state-sponsored violence** that targets communities of color
- standing with **LGBTQ persons** to gain broader inclusion into their societies
- promoting **fair trade and sweatshop-free buying** to support living wages
- generating **youth leadership** for social justice