

<p>Excmo. Sr. Presidente Gustavo Petro Urrego President of the Republic of Colombia contacto@presidencia.gov.co</p>	<p>Sra. Luz Adriana Camargo Attorney General of Colombia despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co</p>
---	--

April 22, 2024

Dear President Petro and Attorney General Camargo:

We are writing to express our sadness and outrage over the killing of **Nasa Indigenous leader Carmelina Yule Paví**, age 62, affectionately known by her community as “La Mayora” (the mayor). She was recognized in Cauca Department for defending women's rights and confronting the recruitment of children. She was a member of the Indigenous guard of the reservation in La Bodega village, Toribío municipality. The resilient leader and Nasa Yuwe speaker had been a victim of conflict on several occasions, but it was the murder of two of her elven children (2020 and 2021) that led her to fight for the community.

Carmelina Yule Paví was a staunch vocal opponent of the Central General Staff (EMC), founded by dissident members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels who reject the 2016 peace accords. She blamed the EMC-Dagoberto Ramos Front for the death of her second child. The forced recruitment of Nasa children infuriated her. She said that she preferred to die before they took more young people.


A weaver with a profound respect for the spiritual essence of nature, she would ask plants for permission to use their leaves in fabrics. As co-founder of the Tejedoras AMA group and professor at the Intercultural Indigenous Autonomous University, she encouraged women to see the practice of weaving as a way to be more independent. Opening paths for other women, she invited them to her house to discuss violent situations they were experiencing.

The Nasa people of northern Cauca have been victims of armed violence for many years, and the EMC has intensified its harassment of communities. On March 16, La Bodega residents intercepted a van in which armed men were holding a young man they had kidnapped. They came out of the van and began shooting at the Nasa community members. Carmelina Yule Paví was shot in the head and died a day later.

We strongly urge that you

- conduct a transparent investigation into the killing of Carmelina Yule Paví, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice.
- implement the Ethnic Chapter of the Peace Agreement and guarantee the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, including indigenous women
- adopt the necessary legislative and administrative measures to recognize Indigenous Territorial Entities and strengthen their autonomy
- promote direct dialogues with Nasa Indigenous communities in Cauca, independent of dialogues with non-state armed groups, for the construction of lasting peace

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator


Christine L. Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Luis Fernando Velasco Chaves, Minister of Interior ~ via email
Luis Gilberto Murillo Urrutia, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email, US mail
José Luis Caballero Ochoa, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email, US mail
UN: Juliette De Rivero, Representative in Colombia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email
Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca-Cxhab Wala Kiwe ~ via email
US Embassy: Francisco Palmieri (Chargé d'Affaires, ad interim); Adam Levy (human rights) ~ via email
US State Department: Desk Officer for Colombia ~ via email
US Senators from Ohio: Brown & Vance ~ via email
US Representatives from Ohio: Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Sykes ~ via email

The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: