

Excmo. Sr. Presidente Gustavo Petro Urrego President of the Republic of Colombia contacto@presidencia.gov.co	Sra. Luz Adriana Camargo Attorney General of Colombia despacho.fiscal@fiscalia.gov.co
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October 13, 2025

Dear President Petro and Attorney General Camargo:

We are deeply concerned for the **safety of residents in Buenaventura**, Valle del Cauca Department. Over the past month the intensification of armed conflicts has resulted in selective assassinations, forced disappearances, internal displacements and social control that imposes fear, extortion and invisible barriers.

Illegal armed groups are forcing residents from their homes. Families flee from one sector to another to protect themselves from threats and extortion; they are abandoning their homes, which are now being occupied by armed groups. The District Police have identified more than 500 houses in a state of abandonment in several neighborhoods that are being by illegal groups for surveillance and control points.

The city is fragmented by invisible barriers that prevent free movement. Young people are limited in their mobility to go to school. Meanwhile, they are faced with recruitment into the armed structures. Teenagers are pressured to carry weapons, carry out surveillance activities, and participate in illegal economies. Girls are being seduced and deceived for sexual exploitation.

There have been at least four recorded enforced disappearances since July, including a 12-year-old girl on September 4 (Yorkelys Valentina Salazar Pérez). Murders have been recorded in several neighborhoods:

Bellavista: Javier Alegría Angulo, age 41 (Sep 20)
 Calima: Jhoan Sebastián Flores Rodríguez, age 18 (Sep 9)
 Carlos Holmes: Christian Darling Chiriboga (Sep 2)
 El Bolívar: Alvin Correa Rosero, age 24 (Sep 21)
 El Dorado: Víctor Alfonso Granja Quintero, age 27 (Sep 21)
 La Transformación: Andrés Felipe Orozco Martínez, age 35 (Sep 19)
 La Virgen: Victor Moreno (Sep 4)
 Las Américas: Brian Alexis Garcés Góngora, age 35 (Sep 25)
 Los Pinos: Alan Josué Valencia Cuero, age 17 (Sep 11)
 Simón Bolívar: Daniel Valencia Riasos, age 22 (Sep 19)

In light of this humanitarian crisis, we urge that authorities in Colombia

- (1) prioritize human security and adopt real guarantees of protection for communities
- (2) consult with community leaders to address causes of violence and exclusion with social investment
- (3) fully implement precautionary measures ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, in consultation with the beneficiaries
- (4) protect humanitarian safe spaces, such as the Puente Nayero Humanitarian Space in the Playita neighborhood

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordiators

copies: CIJP: Comision Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz / Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission ~ via email
 Daniel García-Peña Jaramillo, Ambassador of Colombia to the US ~ via email
 José Luis Caballero Ochoa, Rapporteur for Colombia, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email
 UN: Scott Campbell, Representative in Colombia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email
 US Embassy: John McNamara (Chargé d'Affaires); Adam Levy (human rights) ~ via email
 US State Department: Desk Officer for Colombia ~ via email
 US Senators from Ohio: Husted and Moreno and US Representatives from Ohio: Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Rulli, Sykes ~ via email

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