

Europe, 23 February 2022

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High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

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Executive Director for the Americas of the European External Action Service of the European Union.

Distinguished Gentlemen:

As you are aware, Colombia remains the country with the highest murder rate for human rights defenders in the world. The record of serious human rights violations has even been recognized by the Colombian Government¹, and there was an alarming escalation just in early 2022, with at least 19 massacres and 22 social leaders murdered². In this regard, the European civil society organizations that are signatories to this communication, deeply lament that both public declarations issued after the VII High-Level Dialogue³ and the XIII Human Rights Dialogue between the European Union and Colombia⁴, have omitted any criticism regarding Colombia's current human rights crisis.

Even though European cooperation with Colombia on climate change and the green pact are important, they will be impossible to implement if the European Union does not fully recognize the reiterated concerns transmitted to the European Union by civil society in relation to the serious and persistent human rights violations in Colombia, where there is a clear state responsibility due to the lack of protection measures for its population. Both texts also omitted the serious humanitarian and environmental crises that affect a majority of the country's territories, with differential impacts on Indigenous and Afro-descendant people and women. In turn, they do not reference the reports or recommendations from independent experts such as the United Nations Special Rapporteurs and High Commissioner for Human Rights, or the United Nations Security Council and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

These omissions are especially acute as they occur in the period leading up to elections with their exorbitant numbers of murders, massacres, forced displacements, enforced disappearances, the recruitment of children, and sexual violence. There are also multiple complaints of abuses committed by state forces, as well as those of collusion with illegal armed groups that involve high-level positions in the state⁵.

To support victims, the European Union must highlight the importance of the Colombian state's full compliance with international human rights law and call on the government to truly commit to the comprehensive implementation of the Peace Agreement. Additionally, in the present context, the European Union must issue, at the very least, a call to contain the crisis that is occurring in the territories, concerning the Colombian state's responsibilities and the deterioration of the Rule of Law, and call for - urgent prevention and protection of

¹ See Departamento Nacional de Planeación: Conpes 4063 de diciembre de 2021, p.11

² See Indepaz, 15 de febrero de 2022.

³ https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/colombia/110753/comunicado-conjunto-de-colombia-y-la-uni%C3%B3n-europea-vii-di%C3%A1logo-pol%C3%ADtico-de-alto-nivel_es

⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/colombia/110841/comunicado-conjunto-de-colombia-y-la-uni%C3%B3n-europea-%E2%80%93-xiii-di%C3%A1logo-de-derechos-humanos_es

⁵ <https://www.bluradio.com/nacion/el-general-r-leonardo-barrero-excomandante-de-las-ff-mm-seria-el-padrino-del-clan-del-golfo>

fundamental rights for the Colombian people, taking into account the concerns transmitted on multiple occasions by European and Colombian civil society.

On the contrary, both declarations legitimize the governmental policies and with this, persistent and systematic human rights violations and crimes against humanity.

Based on the above, we urge that these concerns be included in future communications or declarations.

We thank you for your time and attention.

Signed:

1. ABColombia
2. Act Iglesia Sueca
3. Agir ensemble pour les droits humains
4. Amnesty International
5. Arbeitsgruppe Schweiz-Kolumbien ask!
6. Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz
7. Asociación Burgos con Colombia
8. Asociación de Investigación y Especialización sobre Temas Iberoamericanos (AIETI)
9. Asociación de Solidaridad con Colombia, KATIO
10. Asociación Zehar-Errefuxiatuekin
11. Association Turpial (Genève, Suisse)
12. Associazione Cinema e Diritti – Salerno
13. Atelier ONGD
14. Broederlijk Denle
15. CCFD - Terre Solidaire
16. CEDSALA (Centro de Documentación y Solidaridad con América Latina y África)
17. Ceibavieja
18. Centro Studi Difesa Civile (Italia)
19. Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)
20. CNCDD-11.11.11
21. Colectiva de Mujeres Refugiadas, Exiliadas y Migradas
22. Colombia Human Rights Committee
23. Colombian Caravana
24. Comisión Ética Internacional por la Verdad-Madrid (CEIV-Madrid)
25. Comitato pace, disarmo e smilitarizzazione del territorio - Campania
26. Comitato Piazza Carlo Giuliani ODV
27. Comité “Daniel Gillard” - Bélgica
28. Congreso de los Pueblos Europa
29. Coop Quetzal (Italia)
30. Cooperació
31. Diakonia (Suecia)
32. Ecovipad -Lyon
33. Entrepueblos-Entrepueblos-Herriarte-Entrepobos
34. EU-LAT Network
35. Familiares Europa Abya Yala de Personas Desaparecidas en Colombia
36. Fastenaktion Suiza
37. Federación Luterana Mundial
38. Festival del Cinema dei Diritti Umani di Napoli
39. FOR Peace Presence
40. Foro Internacional de Víctimas- Suecia
41. ForumCiv
42. France Amérique latine
43. Fundación Mundubat
44. Fundación Sueca para los Derechos Humanos
45. IFOR Austria
46. Iniciativas de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo - ICID
47. Instituto de Cooperación Internacional y Desarrollo Municipal (INCIDEM)
48. International Association for Human Rights and Social Development (AIDHDES)
49. International Fellowship of Reconciliation - IFOR
50. kolko – Menschenrechte für Kolumbien e.V.
51. Kolumbienkampagne- Berlin
52. Kristna Fredsrörelsen / SweFOR
53. La Coordinadora de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo
54. LAeQUA srls (Italia)
55. Lliga dels Drets dels Pobles
56. Nexus Human Rights
57. Oficina Internacional de Derechos Humanos – Acción Colombia – (Oidhaco)
58. Organización Mundial Contra la Tortura (OMCT)
59. Pax Christi Internacional
60. Paz con Dignidad
61. Peace Brigades International
62. PeaceWomen Across the Globe (PWAG)
63. People in Need (Czech Republic)

64. Plataforma Extremeña de Solidaridad con Colombia
65. Programa Asturiano de DDHH
66. Protection International
67. Red europea de Comités Oscar Romero (SICSAL Europa)
68. Réseau France Colombie Solidarités
69. Rete italiana Colombia Vive
70. SOLdePAZ.Pachakuti
71. SOLIFONDS, Suiza
72. Solsoc
73. SUDS, solidaritat i cooperación
74. SWISSAID
75. Taula Catalana por la Paz y los Derechos Humanos en Colombia, formada por:
 - Ajuntament de Lleida
 - Assembla de Cooperació per la Pau
 - Associació Catalana per la Pau
 - Centre Delàs Estudis per la Pau
 - Comissió Catalana d'ajuda al Refugiat
 - Consell Nacional de la Joventut de Catalunya
 - Cooperació
 - Entrepobles
 - Fons Català de Cooperació al Desenvolupament
 - Foro Internacional de Víctimas
 - Fundación Indera
- Fundació Pau i Solidaritat – CCOO Catalunya
- International Action for Peace - IAP
- Intersindical – CSC
- Justícia i Pau
- Colectiva de Mujeres Refugiadas Exiliadas y Migradas de Colombia en España
- La Fàbric@
- Lafede.cat
- Lliga dels Drets dels Pobles
- Mujer Diáspora
- Nabowa, Xarxa per la Pau
- Oxfam Intermón
- Plataforma Unitària contra les Violències de Gènere
- REDS - Solidaridad para la transformación social
- Sindicalistes Solidaris – UGT Catalunya
- UNIPAU – Universitat Internacional de la Pau
76. Terre des Hommes Deutschland
77. Terre des Hommes Schweiz
78. Terre des Hommes Suisse
79. Vamos por la paz - Ensemble pour la Paix
80. We effect
81. YAKU