PUBLIC DENOUNCEMENT:

Human rights violations and territorial conflicts in Cauca, Colombia

Human Rights and Social Organizations of Colombia, I hereby inform the national and international community that **the Colombian peasant community has been the victim of aggressions that include very serious human rights violations by the National Army on March 27, 2025 in Saravena Arauca and March 29 in Cajibío Cauca.**

Facts:

Troops of the 8th army division have militarized the villages of Saravena Arauca with the purpose of carrying out works in the oil infrastructure without having started the mentioned work to this date, on March 27th two recognized peasants of the region were attacked by members of the National Army attached to the Cavalry Group No. 18 General Gabriel Revéiz Pizarro with firearms, resulting in serious injuries for one of them.

On March 29, 2025 in the department of Cauca, municipality of Cajibío, district of La Venta, village of La Venta, National Army troops attached to the 29th Brigade, Infantry Battalion No. 7, fired firearms and deployed an operation with drones, tanks and trucks, against a group of peasants who were demonstrating in defence of the land, injuring peasant Luis Álvaro Garzón Pino with a projectile, who was treated at the Cajibío health center and later transferred to the San José Hospital in Popayán, where despite receiving medical attention, he was repeatedly disturbed by members of the public forces who, through undue pressure, demanded that he incriminate himself and recognize himself as a member of an armed group.

During the course of the morning, the National Army pursued the peasants between the villages of La Venta, La Viuda and La Cima, firing indiscriminately and also tried to force their way into these communities, which opposed the violent incursion in an organized manner. At the same time, the public forces carried out harassment with firearms fired in the air, intimidating and impeding the mobility of the inhabitants in the villages of La Unión and El Cofre.

In the operation deployed by the army, it was possible to evidence **Open Violations against Human Rights** such as those listed below.

-Use of firearms against demonstrations by the unarmed population.

-Excessive use of force through the use of firearms and intimidation to limit locomotion and communication.

-Excessive and arbitrary use of State force.

-Signaling, persecution, stigmatization and abuse of authority against the civilian population.

-Dissemination of false and stigmatizing information to cover up the repression.

It is worth highlighting the systematic violations of human rights by the Colombian public forces and the Colombian state, the creation of judicial structures, and the cover-up of attacks against the civilian population with alleged combat scenarios with armed groups. These attacks occur in the context of alliances with multinational companies, such as Smurfit Westrock, in this case.

Demands to the Colombian State:

1. Immediate cessation of aggressions: The National Army and the Ministry of Defence are demanded to stop any action that violates the human rights of the peasant community.

2. Immediate cessation of the accusations against the peasant population living in the areas of social, political and armed conflict.

3. Investigation and sanction: The competent authorities, among them the Attorney General's Office must investigate the events that occurred and sanction those materially responsible and the entire line of command.

4. We request the Ombudsman's Office to accompany: those affected and injured by these events, the communities violated by the National Army and Human Rights Organizations in their work.

We request that in situ verification missions be carried out jointly and in coordination with the international community, the population, organizations and institutions. The situation in Cajibío and Saravena is a reflection of the structural tensions faced by the peasantry and rural communities in Colombia and the urgency to materialize the comprehensive and popular agrarian reform. It is essential that immediate measures be taken to protect the rights of these communities, guarantee their wellbeing and the food sovereignty of the country.